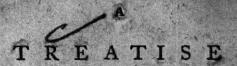
# TREATISE

ON THE

D R O P S Y

[PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIX-PENCE.]

1/6 ESITAST being the first of [ strick his area read the street of



ON THE

# DROPSY,

WHEREIN

The various Kinds of the Disease are considered, with their different Causes, &c. &c.—The Absurdity of the present general Mode of Cure exposed, and a different one recommended as pursued by the Author.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

## AN APPENDIX,

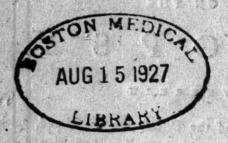
### CONTAINING

A few remarkable Cases which had been given up and abandoned as incurable, by medical Practitioners of the highest Character and Reputation, but were afterwards cured by the Mode proposed; adduced as a Proof of its Superiority over the common Method.

### BY A PHYSICIAN.

### LONDON:

Printed for the AUTHOR, and to be had at his House, No. 18, Upper Eaton-Street, Pimlico: Sold likewise by Shepperson and Reynolds, No. 137, Oxford-Street, and G. Kearsley, Fleet-Street



1. Mg. 240,

MALOLAVELL

the first constitute of the cold of the constitution of the constitution

Later and other properties



# INTRODUCTION.

A confiderable part of the following work was originally published in Latin at Leyden, more than five-and-twenty years fince, at the time of the author's taking his degree of Doctor of Physic at that University; it was then thought not devoid of merit. He therefore now presents it to the English reader with such alterations, additions and improvements, as a strict attention to the dropfy for almost thirty years, and a confiderable share of practice, " particularly. in hydropic diseases," during the greater part of that period, in various climates and different quarters of the world, have fuggefted; carefully avoiding all technical terms as much as possible, or the subject would permit, that the whole might be intelligible to every class of readers, more particularly those labouring under hydropic complaints, for whose use and advantage it is more immediately written and published.

The dropfy, though so common and fatal a disease, don't appear to have had any great attention bestowed upon it by the medical world, with a view to improvement in the mode of cure, until within these sew years; hence the

В

flight

flight difference to be observed between the practice of the present day and the more early ages of medicine.

The infrequency of cure in hydropic difeases has been remarked from the earliest ages of medicine to the present time; all attempts at improvement appear to have been neglected and abandoned as sutile; within these twenty years even, a celebrated physician in the northern part of this lise, treating upon dropsical complaints, quotes one of the ancient physicians, of remarking, "that the sew who re-"covered from the dropsy, their cure was to be attributed rather to supernatural aid than to art:" to which he adds, "modern physicians, were they as honest, could say little more."

Though till within these sew years improvement in the cure of the dropfy appears to have been despaired of and little attended to; yet, since that period, it seems to have more excited the attention of the practitioners of the healing art, and some powerful active medicines have been recommended in the cure of the various kinds of the disease; one alone however has come into any thing like general use, and even that is again (perhaps undeservedly) growing into disrepute, owing to the uncertainty and violence of its operation; the smallest dose even sometimes occasioning the most alarming symptoms: so that with the exception of one or two articles, and the indulgence of the free use of liquids to hydropic patients, contrary to the opinions of all the sages of antiquity, the mode of cure is similar to what it was a thousand, or even two thousand years ago; a reflection which cannot sail to excite the regret of the philanthropist, if the takes a comparative view of the sew cured, with the many who sall victims to the disease.

The medicines generally directed for the cure of hydropic diseases are of the most violent kind-the strongest vomits and purgatives, though a moment's reflection ought to convince every one of the absurdity of the practice; for if the general causes of the dropfy (as explained in the course of the following work) are carefully confidered, it must appear evident and incontestible, that violent medicines, or more firictly speaking, active medicines, administered in fuch doses as to excite violent operation, can feldom, if ever be given with advantage, but may occasion a dropfy to become incurable from the excessive debility induced, which might have been cured by evacuants of a milder kind.

B 2

Can any practice be more abfurd than directing violent emetics or strong drastick purgatives in such cases of dropsy as arise from, or are attended with debility.—As in infancy or old age, or when the consequence of hæmorrhage, or long continued prior disease, when perhaps the heart scarce possesses energy sufficient to propel the blood forward through the system, where the stomach and intestines have perhaps shrunk in their capacity, and the various sunctions of life are performed with difficulty?

Notwithstanding the author thus reprobates the present general practice in hydropic diseases, and considers it as a frequent cause of want of success in the attempt to cure, yet candour, truth and justice compel him to acknowledge that the infrequency of cure is not confined to the erroneous mode of treating the disease; but it has likewise another source, viz. the sometimes insuperable difficulty of removing the cause of it, as will be readily discernible from a view of the general causes before alluded to; for the removal of the water accumulated within the cavities, is but in very few instances the cure of the disease.

When hereafter, in the following sheets,

the author treats of the general causes of dropsy, and enumerates what they are, it will be obvious, that it is not at all times in the power of medicine to remove them; but he will attempt to prove, as well by arguments as facts, that his mode of cure will frequently succeed, whilst that pursued by the first physicians of modern date will fail; but this will appear more evident towards the latter part of the work, in the Appendix, in which some few remarkable cases will be related.

to head to be added a resided noting the per

It may not perhaps be improper to obferve here, that when the author speaks of his mode of cure, it is not to be supposed that it is always and invariably the same, or performed even by the same medicines; for notwithstanding he sometimes finds it necessary to use particular medicines of his own invention and preparation, yet he has frequently occasion for others, which are common and univerfally known; all that he is defirous of having understood, when speaking of his mode of cure in distinction to the common one, is. that he uses the mildest class of evacuants, or very small doses of the more active medicines. which prove oftentimes fuccessful (especially when affifted by others of his own composition) in even the worst kinds and stages of the disease, which modern practice frequently attempts in vain by the roughest and most violent methods; the advantages and infinite superiority of his mode of practice will be sufficiently apparent to every impartial reader, who peruses the sew histories of cures given in the Appendix, which will incontestibly prove that the method he pursues does and will succeed even in cases given over and abandoned by others.

It should be strictly attended to in the perusal of the cases, alluded to in the Appendix, that many of them had been long under the direction of some of the most eminent of the profession; they had been treated with the most active and powerful medicines the materia medica afforded, directed by all the skill, scientific education, long practice and great experience could suggest; yet several of these cases, under the hands of the author, yielded to the same medicines as they had before bid defiance to, but exhibited in a different manner; in a mode peculiar to the author's own practice, so far as he has ever read or heard of.

Having thus faid sufficient on the errors of practice in dropsical cases, before the author

thor concludes this introductory part of his work, it is necessary that he should point out an error by no means uncommon in dropsical patients, namely, too long neglecting to send for medical assistance; they ought to know that let the cause, species or time of life be what it may, hydropic diseases are, cateris paribus, more or less difficult of cure, in proportion to the length of time they have existed.

TREATISE

Andrew of the rocky resolves to reside each and part the best trainer trainer and read of air of air is and the second of some one, encounted at the second beld in pully dan green day green and copern. ender when all the respect to another transfer to THE Edward towards to every theme against Juli Mayor at lates of early and a training a property of in halmoners it was no much his one has begin." believe and rear men in light of

# TREATISE

ON THE

### DROPSY.

The dropfy is a disease common to every period of life, and is of various kinds, each of which will be hereaster described and sufficiently marked to distinguish it from any other species of the disease, to which, in its general symptoms, it may bear some analogy.

It may perhaps be right here in the beginning to define with precision, what is to be understood by the word dropsy, before entering upon the history of its various-causes, different modes of cure, &c. &c.

A dropfy is a præternatural accumulation of watery fluids in any cavity of the body, and is distinguished by different na nes, according to fituation, or the cavity such fluids may occupy: thus, for instance, when the water is collected in

C

Hydrothorax, or Dropfy of the Breast; when the fluids occupy the cavity of the abdomen or belly, it is named Ascites, and is denominated Anasarca when within the cellular membrane beneath the skin.

These various kinds will be distinctly marked, and likewise the dropfy of the Ovarium, which latter is the more necessary, as from the general symptoms of this kind of dropsy, more especially in the latter stages of the disease, it may be mistaken for the Aseites.

Watery fluids may likewise be accumulated in other cavities besides the belly, chest and cellular membrane, as within the pericardium, or bag containing the heart, when the disease is called Hydrops Pericardii, or Dropsy of the Pericardium, or in the testes, when it is named Hydrocele; and, when within the ventricles of the brain, Hydrocephalus. It is unnecessary to say more upon these, than to observe, that in the dropsy of the heart there are no pathognomonic symptoms to discriminate it from the Hydrothorax, which it often accompanies; for almost every symptom attending the

one kind is common to the other, and they are both cured by the same medicines.

from some coling wind develor Deposites, therefore,

The general causes and mode of cure of the dropsy, as explained in the course of the work will, cateris paribus, equally, apply to every species of the disease.

+ol benisland and notional descention the

In every cavity of the body there is a certain portion of aqueous fluids secreted from the apertures or mouths of vessels, called exhalants, which are spread every where around the sides of the different cavities for the purpose of keeping their surfaces moist.

- do ad at the education negative temperature as

These sluids, thus secreted, are again obforbed by another set of vessels, called Lymphatics, which are valvular, and by that means prevent the return of the sluids into the cavities from whence they have been absorbed, but propel them forwards, principally into the thoracic duct, which entering the lest subclavian vein, they are again carried into the general mass of circulating sluids.

Thus it is evident, that a præternatural accumulation of watery fluids, or dropfy, may take place in any cavity of the body, should the C2 effusion

\$102 from a private similar a self and accompany of the company

effusion (secretion) by the exhalants be increased, or absorption by the lymphaticks be diminished from any cause whatsoever. Dropsies, therefore, must arise from one or both of these principal causes, viz. Increased Effusion or Diminished Absorption.

Effusion and Absorption thus explained, being understood and admitted, it will facilitate the enquiry into the various causes, which by either increasing the one, or diminishing the other, may give rise to hydropic diseases.

COURT HALF TO BE SEEN OF THE S

steelite and to relability or

The causes which may occasion increased or præternatural effusion are the first to be considered, and may be divided into three general heads, viz.

First, An increase of pressure upon the extremities of the exhalant arteries; their apertures and the fluids effused, being in their natural state:

Secondly, The enlargement of the apertures or mouths of the exhalants, the pressure and the fluids being as usual;

Automobile to a section to

Thirdly, An increase of the aqueous or watery parts of the blood, by which, from the want of its usual viscidity, a greater portion of watery fluids escapes into the cavities, notwithstanding the apertures of the exhalants, as well as pressure upon their extremities, are as usual.

the accented uncertical relations and

That increase of pressure, the first cause mentioned as occasioning increased effusion, will have that effect, appears sufficiently obvious by attending to what is established in Hydraulicks, viz. that the quantity of sluid discharged from a tube of any given diameter will, "cateris paribus," be in proportion to the pressure with which the sluid within acts upon the mouth of such tube: therefore, whatever increases the pressure of the sluids contained within the artetries upon the mouths of their extremities or exhalants, will occasion a greater quantity of such sluids to be discharged in a certain given time, and that in proportion to the increased pressure.

In the human body there are variety of causes which may increase the pressure of the sluids upon the mouths of the exhalants. Thus, whatever increases the action of the heart and large arteries, will occasion the blood to be impelled

pelled with greater force and velocity into the smaller vessels, and hence occasion an increased essusion; this is sufficiently apparent from perspiration and other secretions, the accustomed essects of increased motion of the body, when no other change appears to be induced, except the increased impetus of the arteries.

The same thing occurs in fevers, where from the increased impetus of the larger arteries, the constriction of the smaller ones is at length overcome, and a profuse sweat is poured out over the whole surface of the body.

Translation of policy is the balance t

The ends of the arteries either terminate in weins, excretory ducts or exhalant canals.—Whenever the passage through the excretory duct is impeded, the propelling power of the heart and arteries will act with increased force upon the exhalants, and thus excite præternatural effusion of sluids; this is another instance of dropfy, arising from increased pressure upon the extremities of the exhalants.

Dropsies, therefore, which have their origin in obstructed perspiration, are not to be considered as arising so much from the increased quantity of watery sluids retained in the blood,

as the increased pressure upon the extremities of the exhalants of the cellular membrane, whenever the excretory ducts or porces of the skin are obstructed, from cold or any other cause.

d no keep while the American

But the most frequent cause of increase of pressure upon the extremities of the exhalants, and thus occasioning præternatural effusion, must be ascribed to affections of the venous system.

Whatever occasions præternatural accumulation of blood in the larger veins, whether by impeding the passage of the blood through the veins, or any other cause, will at length necessarily increase the pressure upon the extremities of the exhalant arteries, and consequently give rise to dropsies by increasing the essure thus, whatever impedes the free passage of the blood in the large veins, which pass through the lungs or right side of the heart, through the liver, spleen, &c. &c. may ultimately be productive of dropsy.

Accumulations of the venous blood may be occasioned by obstructions within the veins themselves, from polypi, or other matter contained within their cavities, or by external causes, causes, from compression by schirrhous, cystic, or steatomatous tumours, pregnancy, &c. &c. the internal diameters of the veins may likewise be diminished, either by an increased thickness of their sides, or by tumours formed within their coats.

of profit to vent the entitlement of near or there is

That obstruction to the return of the venous blood will occasion dropsy, has been clearly ascertained by the samous experiment of Lowers, who opened the abdomen of a large mastiff dog, tied the vena cava, and asterwards sewed up the wound: the animal immediately languished, and in a few hours afterwards died. Upon opening the abdomen after death, there appeared as much water esfused within the belly, as if the animal had long suffered under an Ascites.\*

This experiment, without any other evidence, is alone sufficient to establish the truth of the doctrine advanced, of venous obstruction exciting præternatural accumulation, but there are an infinite number of cases upon record, in different medical writers, likewise to corroborate it; thus we have a case of dropsy

mentative of the blood in the large veins

THE WASTING STATE

<sup>\*</sup> Lower de Corde, Cap. 2, p. 123.

of the thorax and abdomen from a polypus in in each ventricle of the heart \*: Bonetus † and Morgagni ‡ mention fimilar cases from the like causes: Monro also affords two cases of the dropsy from schirrhi of the stomach and spleen, and two others from steatomatous tumours of the Uterus. De Haen likewise mentions an Ascites from the Omentum being enlarged to a most uncommon size ||.

Obstructions and infarctions of the mesenteric glands frequently occasion dropsies, schirrhus of the liver is likewise a very common cause of dropsy, by hindering the return of the venous blood. The Uterus in the gravid state, especially in the latter months of gestation, by its pressure upon the vena cava, and thus impeding the passage of the blood, is productive of hydropic swellings of the lower extremities and Labia Pudenda in many women.

A very curious and fingular case of dropsy arising from an increased thickness of the coats

<sup>\*</sup> Ephem. German. dec. 2. Ann. 6. Obs. 232.

<sup>+</sup> Sepulchret. Lib. iii. § 21.

<sup>1</sup> De Sedibus et Causis Morborum, Epist. 38.

<sup>§</sup> Essay on the Dropsy, pages 15, 16, 17.

<sup>||</sup> Ratio Medendi, vol. 1. p. 258.

of the veins occurred at Edinburgh, some years ago, of which the patient died. It appeared, upon dissection afterwards, that the coats of the left jugular and subclavian vein were much thicker than in their natural state, whilst some of the adjoining glands were so much enlarged, that they appeared to act as ligatures upon the veins, occasioning anasarcous swellings about the head, sace and neck, and greatly affecting both speech and deglutition.

This fingular case has been finely illustrated by an apposite experiment of Lowers, who having tied the jugular veins of a dog, the head and all the parts above the ligature became hydropical, and in two days the animal died. Upon diffection the vessels and glands appeared greatly distended and filled with serum \*.

delications and in Collices of the melon-

But accumulations of blood in the venous fystem may take place and occasion increased effusion, where there is no impediment to the return of the venous blood from any substance occupying the cavities of the veins, or from compression without, the passage through them being in the natural state: thus, an erect posture long.

<sup>\*</sup> De Corde, cap. 2. p. 128.

continued, for instance, will give rise to accumulation in the venous system and increased essusion by the exhalants.

The known laws of Hydrostaticks will sufficiently explain how this cause will effect an increase of pressure upon the extremities of the exhalants, and why anasarcous swellings of the lower extremities of tall people, or of such whose occupations in life occasion them to be upon their seet the greater part of the day, are so generally observed at night; yet, in the morning, owing to the recumbent position of the body during the night, they are no longer visible.

Accumulation of blood in the venous system, or venous plethora, appears to have occurred sometimes from suppression of sanguineous periodical discharges, and thus occasioned hydropic diseases by increased pressure upon the exhalants. Forrestus relates the history of a dropsy from suppression of the menstrual\*, and another from the suppression of the hemorphoidal slux .

example of the distribute of the ax-

<sup>\*</sup> Opera omnia, Lib. 19. Obs. 34.

<sup>†</sup> Obs. 39.

The suppression even of accustomed serous evacuations, will, in some measure, tend to produce venous plethora, and by that means be the cause of dropsy; though this will, in some degree, likewise increase the watery parts of the blood; therefore dropsies, arising from this source, must be considered as in part originating from both causes.

From what has been already observed, it is evident that the causes which may induce hydropic complaints, by increasing the pressure upon the extremities of the exhalants, are various. These having been sufficiently considered, the next general head of increased essusion is the enlargement of the diameters of the exhalants—the pressure and the sluids being in their natural state.

All the different exhalants of the human body, however minute, appear to posses, in some degree, a muscular contractible coat, as well as the other arterial vessels; and it seems consonant to reason, that the diameters and actions of these small vessels, in their resistance to the sluids impelled into them must, in a great degree, depend upon the strength, sone, vigour, and contractility of this muscular coat.

If this is admitted, it will follow, that whatever occasions debility or atonia of the muscular fibre in the small arteries, will diminish their usual resistance to the circulating stuids; their diameters will necessarily be enlarged, and thus afford a more easy passage to the sluids into the various cavities of the body.

Hence, in laxity of the folids and languor of the vital principle, as in chlorofis, cachexy, nervous atrophy, paralytic affections, ill-formed gout, or after long continued fevers, or other acute diseases protracted beyond their wonted period, asthma, early and advanced life, &c. &c.—hydropic diseases of some kind are generally observed, as they are the almost inseparable attendants upon debility.

The third and last head of general cause of dropsy arising from an increased effusion, remains to be considered, viz. too great tenuity of the circulating sluids.

news of an arms

It has been faid by a medical writer of great eminence, that dropfies never take place from too great tenuity of the humours or superabundance of water in the circulating sluids, unless where the vital powers were previously

wery much diminished; and, in support of this opinion, an experiment of Schultzius is quoted, who after bleeding a dog almost to death, caused him to drink a great quantity of water, which occasioned a dropsy. In this manner, says he, do those become hydropic, who weakened with disease, drink large quantities of water.

But this experiment is by no means conclusive, nor will it support the inference deduced, for it proves no more than what has ever been universally acknowledged; that where there is very great debility of the vital power, let it arise from whatever cause it may, that a large quantity of water, or thin aqueous liquor, hastily swallowed, will produce a dropsy; but there are numerous instances, and they frequently occur, of hydropic diseases taking place in the young and healthy, from drinking profusely of thin watery liquors. See cases, No. 1 and 2, in the Appendix.

Willis, Monro, and various other medicalauthors, whose works are the result of careful observations, afford numerous instances of hydropic diseases arising from drinking prosusely of water, small-beer, barley-water, or other weak liquors, and though some of the parties were in a debilitated state at the time of swallowing the sluids, yet others of them were in perfect health.

Notwicklingding the agercus nires of the

Too great tenuity of the blood may arife from various causes besides the too liberal and unrestrained use of the more aqueous and thin kinds of liquids; as for instance, from poor and stender diet, deprayed digestion, from the more viscid and tenacious parts of the blood, " as the red Globules and Lymph," being discharged, as in violent hæmorrhages, or the Lymph alone in serous evacuations, or from the retention of the more watery parts of the blood, by suppression of the usual secretions of urine and perfpiration.

Innumerable are the histories of hydropic complaints from hæmorrhages, &c. to be found in Riverius, Lister, Forrestus, Schenkius, Hossman and other authors—who relate cases of dropsy arising from vomiting of blood, spitting of blood, too long continuance of the menstrual discharge, the too free use of the lancet, bleeding at the nose, floodings, &c. &c. Hydropic discases are likewise frequently observed to succeed violent serous evacuations; such as long continued

cellular membranes at large secondaria reluitor

nued and violent purging, dysenteries, and the frequent use of acrid, drastic purgatives.

Notwithstanding the aqueous parts of the blood will unquestionably be increased by the loss of the more viscid and tenacious parts, as in hæmorrhage, &c. yet hydropic complaints immediately supervening hæmorrhages, and similar discharges, are not to be considered as absolutely and folely arising from this cause, but must in a great measure be charged to the langour of the vital powers induced; for from whatever cause the vis vitæ may be diminished, the blood is propelled feebly through the fystem, owing to the weak action of the heart, and the thinner parts escape into the cavities of the body and cellular membrane; whilft, on the other hand. the Lymphaticks partaking of the general debility, are inadequate to their functions and cannot absorb the fluids thus deposited; hence the face becomes pale, the skin discoloured, the folid parts flaccid, and the body weak, languid, torpid and hydropical. it is a seal out the first to a

Dropsies arising from suppression of urine, or perspiration only, independent of any other cause, are not frequent in medical writers, though there are sufficient testimonies of the fact; but in such cases, increased tenuity of the sluids is not to be considered as the only cause of the essusion, as has been before suggested.

Having thus considered the cases of dropsy arising from increased effusion by the natural secretory organs, which discharge the fluids into the various cavities of the body, it will be necessary to mention perhaps another kind of dropsy from increased effusion, different and distinct from the foregoing; as not arising from natural secretion, but from the laceration or rupture of the vessels, transmitting the thinner or more watery sluids of the body: such as rupture of the small arteries from contusions, luxations, &c.—or of the absorbent vessels or lymphaticks, from too great distention or other causes.

There are many cases of dropsies from these causes in different medical works. Turner relates the history of an Hydrocele, arising, as supposed, from the saddle in riding. Monro relates one from a fall, another of a scrotal Anasarca, from a blow received the day before : an Hydrothorax from a blow on the breast;

<sup>\*</sup> Vol. 1. p. 259.

<sup>†</sup> Essay on the Dropsy, p. 125.

<sup>1</sup> The fame, p. 18.

and an universal dropsy from a luxation of the wrist, in endeavouring to lift a heavy weight \*. Mead mentions a dropsy of the belly, arising from a blow on the right side †: and Riverius gives a case of dropsy of the foot, from a luxation of the ancle ‡.

It is doubtful, perhaps, whether to this head can properly be affigned those extraordinary and præternatural effusions which are sometimes poured into the cavities from the rupture of vesicles and sacs.

In the encysted dropsy of the Ovarium, for instance, so long as the cyst, in which the water is collected, remains whole, the increase of the water within it is slow and imperceptible, and in many cases it does not increase to any considerable size, or occasion much inconvenience to the patient for many years; if, however, the cyst happens to be ruptured from any cause, and the contents poured into the cavity of the abdomen, the quantity of water essued from the inner surface of the membrane, forming the cyst, will be greatly increased, in con-

<sup>\*</sup> Essay on the Dropfy, p. 12.

<sup>†</sup> Monita Medica, cap. viii.

I Cent. iii. Obf. 71.

fequence of the pressure of the fluid before contained within it, being removed.

Thus, having confidered the various causes which, by increasing the effusion of the sluids into any cavity of the body, may occasion dropfy, there remains to be confidered the other general division, viz.

### DIMINISHED ABSORPTION,

Which may be occasioned from obstruction of the absorbent vessels themselves; these may be considered as of two kinds:

First, The extremities of the veins belonging to the sanguiserous system; which, in those parts of the body not surnished with valvular Lymphaticks, are necessarily endowed with the power of absorbing the effused sluids.

Secondly, The valvular lymphatic Veins, to whom that office more generally belongs.

The obstruction of these again may be two-fold; the more general Passages or particular Lymphaticks.

L

Nult

It has been observed, that absorption may be diminished from obstruction of the veins in those parts of the body not supplied with valvular Lymphaticks; this, however, occurs no where in the human body, except in the ventricles of the brain, where the absorbent Lymphaticks are not known to exist: hence, probably, arises the Hydrocephalus.

Obstructions in the valvular Lymphaticks may exist, either in the more general or in particular ones, the greatest part of the lymph passing from the lymphatic veins into the thoracic duct, and from thence to the subclavian vein. If the free passage of the lymph, through the larger Lymphaticks is impeded, it will of course stagnate in the smaller, by which they will be distended and prevented emptying themselves; hence, absorption in the cavities will cease, whilst the exhalation by the arteries continuing as usual, a dropsy will be induced.

Though obstruction in particular Lymphaticks, causing dropsy, is not every day conspicuous, yet there are sufficient cases of hydropic tumours arising from this cause to establish the fact. The late justly celebrated Doctor Hunter relates the history of an inguinal tumour break-

ing and discharging a great quantity of thin serous sluid, and continuing so to do for several days; the discharge afterwards gradually diminished, and at length suddenly ceased; but in consequence of the wound healing, an hydropical tumour arose below in the thigh \*.

Hydropical swellings of the lower extremities, in consequence of a swelling of the inguinal glands, and the same phænomena in the upper, from swelling of the axillary glands, have been observed by others.

Diminished Absorption, may likewise, perhaps, proceed from a paralytic affection of the absorbents, for there can be no doubt entertained, that the absorbents, are possessed of an irritable muscular contractile power: this is evident from various phænomena, such as their emptying themselves after death, &c. &c.

If, therefore, this contractile or muscular power may be diminished by the same causes, which induce palsy in other parts of the body, it is fair reasoning to suppose, that the depletion of the absorbents will be in proportion, and like manner retarded: and thus the absorp-

<sup>\*</sup> Medical Commentaries, P. 1. p. 58.

### [ 34 ]

tion of the fluids proceed more flowly; to this cause perhaps, in some degree, may be placed the hydropic tumours, accompanying paralytic affections of the extremities.

Having thus briefly enumerated the various proximate causes of hydropic diseases, a Synoptical View of them is given in the annexed Table:

sold by the party of the last the state of the second section of the second

PLANER PROPERTY LINES CONTRACTOR OF THE SECOND

policy of the part of the property of the party of the pa

and of the factor of the facto

indianaki kana di aris and japanesi insi s

# A SYNOPTICAL VIEW OF TABLE Of the CAUSES of DROPSY.

The general causes of Dropsy are two, viz.					
Diminished Absorption		Ž.	Increased Effusion		
occasioned by			occasioned by		
the extremities of the fanguiferous fystem; or adly, Obstruction in the valvular Lymphaticks.	4thly, Rupture of the Lymphaticks, or, 5thly, Rupture of Veficles and Sacs.	3dly, Watery state of the blood.	adly, Enlargement of their apertures.		ist. Increased pressure upon the extremities of the exhalants.
arifing	from	arifing fr	AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PARTY OF	ar ar	ifing from
Enlargement of the inguinal, axillary, or other glands.	ferous parts, G. Contufions, Luxati- ons, &c.	MATERIAL STATE OF THE PROPERTY	Debility, atonia, &c. D.  Drinking too large quantities of thin water fluids, poor flender	Venous plethora, C.	Increased impetus of the arteries, A. Obstructions in the venous system, B.
Accompanying, or caused by					
	G. Long continued diarrhæas, teries, and the frequent use purgatives.	E. Hæmorrhages, &c.  F. Suppression of perspiration, un	other periodical difcharges. D. Chlorofis, cachexy, palfy, i gout, fevers, or other acute pers, accidentally protracted their wonted period, afthma, old age, &c. &c.	mours within their coats.  Suppression of accustomed tions, as menstrual, hæmorrh	A. Fever—Obstruction in the ducts, &c. &c.  B. Substances within the veins lypi, &c. or compression with schirrous, cystic, or steatoma mours, pregnancy, &c. increase

excretory

thout, from natous tu-cafed thickns or tu-

hoidal, or

evacua-

irregular nte distem-ed beyond , infancy,

as, dyfen-e of acrid

irine, &c.

all in the sen than 17 to all you become

A few words in observation of the causes, which may in a more remote degree predispose, or tend to produce hydropic complaints, or such diseases as will ultimately terminate in dropfy, may not be altogether improper.

Notwithstanding hydropic complaints are common to every age, and both sexes, yet they are more frequent attendants upon advanced life than the more early periods, and more frequently attack women than men, owing, perhaps, to less sensibility and greater laxity of sibre: they are consequently more exposed to complaints, both tedious and dangerous, from the general langour of the circulation;—hence corpulency, dropsy, &c.

Whatever tends to relax the body, predisposes to the dropfy; thus a lazy, indolent, sedentary mode of living, as well as particular habits and occupations in life, pave the way for the complaint; hence we frequently observe hydropic diseases attack literary men, who are much addicted to study, and taylors, owing to their sedentary habits of life.

Long continued damp, rainy weather, employments in and upon the water, swampy low low soil, effluvia arising from the earth and waters in particular situations, all tend to lay the foundation of hydropic complaints; but dropsies arising from such causes are seldom to be considered as primary diseases, as they are almost always the effect of a morbid affection of the viscera.

Whatever tends in the remotest degree to vitiate the viscera, or occasion obstruction in them, lays the foundation insensibly for future dropsy; thus hard viscid food, long continued intermittents, jaundice, and immoderate use of spirituous liquors are remote or predisponent causes.

In the beginning of this effay every præternatural accumulation of water was defined a dropfy, but it was the author's defign to confider only the Anafarca, Ascites and Hydrothorax as the more general kinds, and of most importance to attend to.

The Anasarca is an extravasation or præternatural accumulation of watery fluids, within the cells of the cellular membrane, and may either be local or universal.

F

This kind of dropfy generally shews itfelf first in the feet, about the ancles, which towards evening are observed to be swelled, especially if the party has undergone much fatigue, been long upon his feet, or fat a confiderable space of time; but these swellings, in the incipient state of the disease, go down during the course of the night, from the recumbent posture of the body, and in the morning disappear; but the hydropic symptoms thus removed from the feet appear in the face, which is puffed up in the morning, especially the eyelids and about the neck, or in either hand, upon which the patient may have accidentally rested during the night. As the difease goes on, the fwelling of the feet ascends to the legs, thighs and belly, and in process of time affects the whole body, attended with paleness of countenance, paucity of urine, (which is very turbid) difficulty of breathing, &c. with all the different symptoms common to dropsy in general, which are more fully enumerated in the history of the Ascites.

The Ascites is a præternatural accumulation of watery fluids within the cavity of the belly, and may be said to be of three kinds, viz. where the water is effused within the peritonæum,

and in which the abdominal viscera are immersed; a second kind is, where the water is contained in vesseles and sacs, when it is called hydatid dropsy; and the third, where the water is interposed between the peritonæum and abdominal muscles.

The most common kind, and what may be called the true Ascites, is that where the water is collected within the peritonæum, and where the abdominal viscera are in immediate contact with the water: by attending minutely to the history and symptoms of this species, it will be readily distinguished from the others.

The Ascites generally begins with lassitude, languor and aversion to motion; the patient passes but little urine, which is thick, and of a red, brick-dust like colour, the pulse generally small and frequent, the belly swells, and upon one hand being placed on one side of it and struck on the other side with the other hand, the sluctuation of the water will be perceptible; the breathing becomes dissicult, accompanied with thirst, which in the further progress of the disease becomes extremely urgent: when the patient is standing,

F 2

the water distends the lower parts of the belly; whilst lying on the back, it swells out the region of the loins; upon the patient turning on either fide, the water immediately distends the lower fide only, especially when the abdomen is not filled—the diaphragm is pressed upwards, attended with great difficulty of breathing, with a hectic dry cough, costiveness, loss of appetite, and a flight degree of fever: as the belly swells the upper parts of the body waste away, the pulse is weak but somewhat hard and tense; when the quantity of fluids accumulated is so great as to fill the whole cavity of the abdomen, respiration becomes so very difficult and oppreffed, when in a recumbent position, that the patient is obliged to fleep in a chair, or nearly an erect posture, from fear of fuffocation. During this disturbed rest, the patient fometimes spits up a little bloody phlegm, the fever is constantly upon the increase, with most intolerable thirst, and frequent bleeding at the nofe-all the fymptoms become daily worse; ulcers, gangrenes and mortifications of the vifcera supervene, and at length, death closes the melancholy scene.

This species of the disease is generally accompanied with anasarcous swellings of the lower

ababa din da di da

lower extremities; and in the progress of the disease, the thighs, scrotum and penis in men, and the labia pudenda in women, are frequently greatly distended.

with the first of the state of

In the hydatid dropfy, the vesicles and sacs which contain the water, are sometimes, in some stages of the disease, distinguishable by the hand, but when they are so much increased in size and number, as to fill the entire cavity of the belly, it is impossible to distinguish it from the true Ascites. In this case it will be necessary to enquire into the origin and progress of the disease, as well as to examine the existing symptoms with all possible accuracy and caution.

In this kind of dropfy the patient is generally first sensible of a dull obtuse pain and tension of the abdomen, which shortly afterwards becomes enlarged; but the progress of the disease is much slower than in the true Ascites, and when the vesicles are attached to any of the viscera, which is frequently the case, the patient, upon turning in bed, is sometimes sensible of a weight falling from one side to the other; there is a want of evident sluctuation, the breathing is less affected than in the Ascites,

the

service of the least the service of

the urine is more copious and in proportion to the quantity of fluids swallowed, the various functions of the body are performed with more ease, nor do the legs become anasarcous, or the other parts of the body waste away, as in the true Ascites. The abdomen, in this disease, is not the least diminished by any medicines, and it will in some cases continue for years without any great inconvenience to the patient.

The true Ascites may be readily distinguilhed from that kind, where the extravalated fluids are collected between the abdominal muscles and peritonæum, which species of the disease first becomes evident by a sense of pain and tenfion-the fwelling which focceeds, is circumscribed and occupies the anterior part of the abdomen only, nor does it change its form or fituation from any alteration of position in the patient, as in the Ascites: it increases more flowly, the thirst is by no means so great, and the urine is nearly the fame as in health; both in quantity and colour it bears a due proportion at least to the quantity of liquids drank; whilst the breathing, even at the time the fwelling is large, is but little affected. A very remarkable Production of the Committee of the Commi

personal and and solution and it with the

odi

case of this kind is given by Tulpius, in his Observations \*.

entry out procedure technique, compared toronte

In attending to the different fymptoms in the various kinds of dropfy of the belly as have been stated, there will be no great difficulty in distinguishing the true from the spurious Ascites.

It will be likewise necessary to distinguish it from the dropsy of the Ovarium, though in the latter stages of this species, when the cyst has been ruptured, and the essued study of the abdomen, it is no very easy matter, unless by tracing back the symptoms, from the information of the patient or her friends, from the sirst attack of the disease.

The dropfy of the Ovarium generally begins with dull obtuse pain, and sense of weight in the hypogastric region and upper part of the thighs; sometimes the pain is confined to one side, in other cases both are affected, according as one or both of the Ovaria become diseased, accompanied with a circumscribed tumour, which is commonly very slow in its

<sup>\*</sup> Observationes, Cap. de Hepat. Lib. 2. Obf. 12.

progress, and the patient suffers but little diminution in her health, at least in appearance, except becoming fomewhat thinner; the urine is as in health, the appetite good, and they menfiruate regularly (unless in the latter stages of the disease) and sometimes have children. It fometimes happens, that where the pain in one thigh is greater than in the other, a swelling of that leg and thigh in a flight degree takes place; whenever it does, it may be confidered as a certain indubitable symptom of the disease originating in the Ovarium of that fide. After the cyft has burst and poured its contents into the cavity of the abdomen, its advance is more rapid and attended with all the fymptoms common to the Afcites, except the anafarcous swellings of the celular membrane of the lower extremities, which feldom occur, unless in the last stages of the disease, and are then generally the effect of preffure and debility.

The Ascites may be readily distinguished from the Tympany, the only disease remaining undescribed, to which it bears any analogy. In the Tympany, the abdomen, when struck by the hand, gives a hollow sound somewhat like that from a drum; the patient, notwithstanding the distension of the belly, moves with the usual agility,

may recess how extent the commend

agility, feels light as in health, and all the various functions of the body are as usual.

The Hydrothorax, or Dropfy of the Breaft, is an accumulation of extravalated fluids within the cavity of the thorax. This species has most of the fymptoms common to the Ascites, and is fometimes attended with fensible fluctuation within the breaft, but not always; the breathing is here more difficult, especially in a recumbent position, than in the Ascites, and it oftentimes happens, that the patients are obliged to be constantly erect, or even stooping forward, to draw their breath with tolerable ease—the pulse, in this hydropic affection, is very irregular and frequently intermits. In some cases the patient starts up from sleep, with a fense of violent oppression of the breast, and strong palpitations of the heart: when such fymptoms occur, it is extremely probable that effusion has taken place within the Pericardlum.

Notwithstanding all these symptoms do not always occur, even where the disease exists, yet some of them generally do in a greater or less degree, especially the intermittent pulse,

G

e

the starting from sleep, palpitation of the heart, &c. therefore, if other hydropic symptoms are attendant, little doubt need be entertained of the disease, notwithstanding some of the symptoms attend complaints, where there is no water in the chest.

The author having sufficiently described the various kinds of droply, it may not perhaps be improper to consider the probable termination of the different hydropic diseases, which are more or less dangerous and difficult to cure from their various causes, the length of time they may have continued, the age or sex of the patient, mode of life, seat of the disease, &c. &c.

#### PROGNOSTICS.

In no disease whatever, to which human nature is incident, is more caution perhaps necessary in prognosticating the probable event, than in hydropic complaints, for it sometimes occurs where there are the best founded hopes of cure, and the patient is apparently going on extremely well, death suddenly and unexpect-

edly takes place. See Case, No. 2, in the Appendix.

The difficulty of curing this disease, (speaking of dropsy in general) will always be greater, where the disease has long existed, (and vice versa) where to long continuance of the disease is added advanced life, the prognostic will be yet more unfavourable.

The dropfy is less dangerous when not preceded by other diseases, where the strength is not much exhausted, the breathing free, and no pain in the thorax or abdomen complained of.

tremities in pregnant women, unless the habit is otherwise diseased, are seldom of serious consequence, as they disappear after delivery.

The Anafarca is generally curable when not connected with other species of the disease.

y he jet has

Dropsies, arising from morbid affections of the viscera, as liver, spleen, &c. are generally very difficult of cure, for the evacuation of the water, which in diseases of the liver

G a

may be fometimes easily effected, is by no means a permanent cure; therefore the prognostic will be in proportion to the ease or difficulty which may attend the removal of the disease existing in the viscera. As every practitioner well knows the extreme difficulty of effecting so desirable a circumstance, he ought to give little encouragement to any hopes the patient may entertain of a favourable termination of the disease; for unless the morbid affections can be removed, the dropsy is incurable.

The Ascites, when unattended by the Anafarca, is generally satal in grown people, but is curable in children.

Dropsies, occasioned by Polypi within the veins, or from diseases of their coats, are certainly fatal, as well as those arising from compression by tumours, which cannot be removed by medicine or operation.

In dropfies dependent on venous plethora from suppressed evacuations, the prognostic will be more or less favourable in proportion to the ease or difficulty which may attend the restoring them. When arifing from laxity of the mulcular fibre, or languor of the vital powers, unless the consequence of prior disease, generally curable.

When the effect of hamorrhage or long continued fever, unless the fever has supervened the hamorrhage, or is an attendant upon morbid affections of the viscera, it is curable.

rented by the applicating at and collisating

When arifing from watery state of the blood, the disease is generally curable, though frequently effected with difficulty.

consta Mapili da Francisco

Dropfies, occasioned by paralytic affections, are more or less readily cured in proportion to the ease or difficulty of regenerating the tone and strength of the part affected.

When the consequence of irregular gout, where the patient is much debilitated by excess or prior disease, the prognostic will always be unfavourable.

1

c

n

The Hydatid Dropfy is incurable.

The Ovarium Dropfy is likewife incurable by medicine; the water may be drawn off by by tapping, and it sometimes cures, but not sufficiently often to justify a savourable prognostick: the return of the disease, to any great extent, has been in some sew instances prevented by the application of, and constantly weating bandages, assisted by the use of diuretic and tonic medicines. See Case, No. 3, in the Appendix.

The Hydrothorax, or Dropfy of the Cheft, whether accompanied by Anafarca or not, is generally less difficult of cure than the Ascites arising from diseased viscera; it is nevertheless a very dangerous disease, and oftentimes proves statal; and, when united with the Ascites, is seldom cured.

months of its appointment to another included

# MODE OF CURE.

in the rate or danger of concentration of the

In treating upon the mode of cure of hydropic diseases, in the subsequent part of this treatise, there will be little occasion to advert to particular species of dropsy; for it is well known, that medicines exhibit similar effects in almost every variety of the disease: but where medical writers of celebrity have pointed out any thing new in the mode of treatment, or where the exhibition of any medicine,

more modern date, has been attended with more advantage in one kind of the difease than another, it will be carefully attended to.

The curative indications in hydropic difeases will necessarily be various, according to the cause, and whether the complaint is the effect or consequence of other diseases, when it is called symptomatic, or exists independent of, and unconnected with, other disorders, when it is denominated Idiopathic.

In the former case it will be necessary to remove the original disease, if possible, together with its effects, "the dropsy," at the same time, and afterwards strengthen the system and prevent further deposition.

But when the accumulated fluids are confiderable in quantity, the original difease of long standing, the hydropic symptoms urgent, and the debility great and increasing, in such cases it will be proper to support and strengthen the patient by every possible means medicines and diet will afford, at the same time promoting the absorption and discharge of the effused shuids by some of the emunctories of the body,

and afterwards by the removal of the original disease and invigorating the system, prevent further deposition.

Where the dropfy is unconnected with other diseases, and originates from mere debility, as is frequent in children and advanced life, the curative intentions will be to increase the action of the heart and arteries, and strengthen the habit; thus diminishing the effusion, and at the same time stimulating the lymphaticks to absorb and carry into the general mass of circulating sluids those aqueous parts which have already been deposited in the various cavities, as well from the languor of the vital principle as laxity of the solids.

Dropfies, from this cause, frequently disappear upon the restoration of the strength of the body, without the assistance of evacuants; should they, however, be found necessary, the mildest only will be required, or can be proper. See Cases, No. 4, 6 and 7, in the Appendix.

Hydropic diseases, arising from, and attended with increased action of the heart and arteries, are to be considered as symptomatic merely. merely, and not as primary diseases. Thus, medicines in common use, in inflammatory complaints will be necessary, and even the repeated use of the lancet will often be required, and will be attended with the best effects. Patients in hydropic diseases are in general extremely averse to bleeding; nor, indeed, can it be proper, unless there are evident signs of inflammation, which is frequently observed in such cases as originate from hard drinking, or incipient obstructions of the viscera from other causes. See Case, No. 5, in the Appendix.

It has been already noticed in the early part of this Essay, that a frequent and general cause of dropsy is obstruction and accumulation in the venous system; these obstructions may arise, as has been before noticed, from various causes, and may be seated in various parts of the system; but the most general cause is affection of the thoracic or abdominal viscera, more especially of the liver.

In a limited work like the present, it is impossible to enter minutely into an investigation, or the cure of the various diseases which, by affecting the viscera, may be productive ultimately of the dropsy; but it is necessary to

observe, that the discharge of the extravasated fluids, when arifing from obstructions of this fort, is very rarely, if ever, a permanent cure, for the cause still remaining, the effusion goes forward, and the water foon accumulates again; therefore, it will ever remain a primary object to do away, if possible, such obstructions. The best mode of effecting it will be readily suggested, by considering the state and duration of the disease, connected with the age, sex, constitution and strength of the patient: these various defiderata must all be taken into account; where the obstruction cannot be removed, or in fuch cases, where at all events it is necessary to discharge the collected fluids, it may be attempted various ways by medicine, viz. by emeticks, purgatives, diureticks, diaphoreticks, &c. and laftly, by scarification and tapping.

#### EMETICK S.

The medical world have for many ages looked up to emeticks with unabated confidence in the cure of hydropic diseases. Many practitioners of high reputation, from the time of Hippocrates to the present day, have written in their praise. They certainly powerfully agitate

evacuate the contents of the stomach, and oftentimes of the intestines likewise, and are considered as powerful medicines in removing obstructions in diseases of the liver, &c. but not-withstanding the praise so liberally bestowed on them, great care and delicacy is necessary in the administering them with safety in dropsical complaints, and, where there is the most remote tendency to inflammation, venæsection ought ever to precede their use; it should likewise be well remembered, that hydropic patients are particularly subject to hæmorrhages from the nostrils, which emeticks frequently excite.

Emeticks, from their stimulus, certainly promote absorption of the extravasated sluids, and notwithstanding their evacuation does not immediately follow, yet Sydenham observes, that the vomiting ceasing, a purging succeeds, which carries off the absorbed sluids\*; which being twice or thrice repeated, the waters are all discharged by vomiting and stool †: but, says a few pages afterwards, that where the sluids are collected in small quantity only, they

<sup>\*</sup> Opera omnia, Cap. de Hydrope, p. 489.

<sup>+</sup> P. 493.

are discharged by emeticks with more difficulty \*.

Sydenham likewise recommends the strongest emeticks, in which he is followed by the celebrated Boerhave, who says, "they ought "to be strong, often repeated, with little intermission between each +."

Many other medical authors of equal fame with Sydenham and Boerhave, have written in praise of vomits in hydropic complaints: it is certain, that violent emeticks generally operate as catharticks likewife: yet, what are the good effects produced? Whatever they are, it may be faid with truth, they are generally transitory and of short duration, for the act of vomiting is a debilitating power, and yet more fo, when fucceeded by violent purging; notwithstanding the quantity of fluids absorbed and discharged by their operation, they soon re-accumulate, in consequence, in some degree, of the increased debility induced. Medicines of this class, when given in small doses, insufficient to excite vomiting, but productive of naufea

<sup>\*</sup> Opera omnia, Cap. de Hydrope, p. 496.

<sup>+</sup> Aphorism. 1245.

only, and repeated at short intervals, frequentally occasion great discharges of water both by the intestines and urinary passages; thus exhibited, they increase the action of the extremities of the vessels, and their operation is more permanent; besides, in this manner, they frequently excite great perspiration.

## PURGATIVES.

Physicians of former ages frequently obferved, in hydropic diseases, a tendency to purging, and reasoning from analogy, they confidered this as an effort of Nature to throw off the disease that way; as Nature seldom errs, it induced medical practitioners, in the more early ages of medicine, to consider the intestines as the channel by which the difease should be carried off, and have accordingly directed cathartic medicines of the strongest kind to be frequently administered for that purpose: this mode of cure has been almost invariably followed ever fince, and it is at this time a general practice, in hydropic difeases, to give the strongest drastic purgatives with little intermission, though it cannot escape the observation of the most ignorant or inattentive practitioner, that notwithstanding the great abundance of watery fluids discharged in confequence

quence of their violence, the disease is not diminished, but increased: for by the debility induced from the frequent use of draftic purgatives, the fluids are poured into the cavities in greater quantity than before, and the patient is at length overwhelmed by the deluge of waters: this is the common and almost invariable effect of draftic purgatives; they exhauft the strength, and consequently increase effusion; and the thirst, which is always a troublesome fymptom, becomes by their frequent use, infupportable: they feldom, if ever, effect a cure, notwithstanding it has been afferted, that by administering strong hydragogue purgatives every other day, the dropfy is cured without the affistance of any other medicine \*.

But catharticks, though perhaps they ought never to be looked up to or depended upon for a cure, are such useful auxiliaries, that recourse must be sometimes had to them: for such is the constipation of the bowels, particularly in the Ascites, from the maceration of the abdominal viscera, when in immediate contact with the water, that laxatives are necessary to

200000

<sup>\*</sup> Storck Ann. Medic. 1761, pag. 61.

carry off the fæces: thus, when the patients are troubled with great dryness of the mouth and fauces, with sense of heat and pain at the sternum, difficult respiration, and fear of suffocation, with thirst, short cough and costiveness, cathartics become necessary, but they ought to be of the milder kind; the faline laxatives are in fuch cases infinitely preferable to any other, as they stimulate the kidneys at the same time, and frequently occasion confiderable discharge of fluids by the urinary passage. -By the use of such, and clysters, relief is obtained by the discharge of the indurated fæces, and an opportunity afforded of throwing in diuretics with more effect: but it is neceffary to observe, that unless in such cases as above, the milder purgatives are inefficacious.

The rougher, or hydragogue purgatives, "as they are called," are jalap, scammony, elaterium, gamboge, buckthorn, &c. &c. Mercury, by the affistance of an adjunct to direct its powers, particularly to the intestinal glands and abdominal viscera, is frequently used with very great advantage, especially in liver cases; but this, where debility already exists.

exists, or is likely to occur, requires very great caution.

The seneka root has been celebrated for the cure of dropsies; it is said to possess purgative, diuretic and sudorissic properties, and that even given in universal dropsy, accompanied with sever, hardness and enlargement of the spleen, it has effected a cure; dispersing the fever and tumour at the same time \*.

Catharticks, combined with diureticks, or given alternately, are faid to increase each other's powers; but the waters generally collect again so immediately after the use of purgatives, that our principal and best dependence will always rest upon

### DIURETICK S.

These are advantageous in an eminent degree, as they less disturb and debilitate the patient than either emeticks or purgatives. In all delicate habits therefore, or where there is great mobility of system, they are unquestionably the best calculated of all the evacuants in hydropic diseases.

<sup>\*</sup> Memoir l'Academ. des Sciences, l'ann. 1744.

Their fuperiority over every other class of evacuants has been universally acknowledged, but the uncertainty of their operation has been as generally complained of; may not this uncertainty in their operation arise from the mode of exhibition?

It has frequently occurred, that diureticks, confessedly weaker than others which have been before administered, have succeeded after the failure of the more active, this seems strongly in savour of the exhibition of the more powerful and active, in smaller doses, than are commonly administered, and more patiently to wait their curative effects. It may probably happen, that the more powerful diureticks, as squill, &c. when exhibited in smaller doses, may act as deobstruents as well as diureticks, whilst given in larger they oftentimes excite the stomach to vomiting, and are thus prevented entering the system.

This idea will be strengthened, when the author mentions his own mode of practice, which will be further illustrated by some sew cases in the Appendix.

There are an infinite number of articles, both culinary and medicinal, which are confidered as diureticks, and most of them are deobstruents likewise; among the former are sound
horse-radish, mustard, onions, garlick, vinegar, asparagus, artichokes, and a variety of
others; and there are upon record some histories
of cures by several of these articles: as a dropsy
cured by the use of onions. Sydenham says,
he has known the dropsy cured by garlick
alone. Burnet likewise relates a cure of an
Ascites by the use of garlick, after the patient
had previously taken a variety of medicines to
no purpose : and Van Swieten gives a case,
"from Combalusier," of Ascites cured by vinegar :.

Notwithstanding various articles, weak with regard to their diuretic powers, have succeeded in the cure or mitigation of hydropic diseases, after the failure of others of confessedly more activity, yet the before-mentioned can only be considered as auxiliaries, and some of them may be made advantageously so, though not as diureticks merely.

<sup>\*</sup> Miscell. Curios. a. n. c. ann. 5, 6. Obs. 40.

<sup>+</sup> Thefaur. Medic. lib. viii. § xii.

Pneumat. Patholog. p. 535.

The other principal diureticks are meadow-faffron, juniper berries, alkaline falts, neutral falts, pareira brava, elder, dandelion, burdock, cantharides, cuprum ammoniacale, cremor tartar, tobacco, foxglove, fquill, &c. &c.

The Colchicum autumnale of Linnæus, or meadow-saffron, was many years since greatly celebrated by Doctor Storck of Vienna, as a powerful diuretic in the cure of hydropic diseases; but it has not exhibited, in this country, such extraordinary good effects as the praises of the Doctor and others gave room to expect; and though at the present day, recourse is sometimes had to it, it is seldom administered but in slight cases, or in a kind of despair, where other and more important diureticks have before failed of success; it is certainly greatly inferior to the squills and many others.

Juniper berries are the product of the Juniperus communis of Linnæus, and are a very powerful diuretick, were much extolled by Etmuller, and have been likewise by others, though they are but little used in modern practice, from the circumstance of the heat and thirst they excite: they have been generally supposed a principal ingredient in the Holland's geneva, which is confidered as a diviretick; but the author has been informed by many in Holland, who were concerned in the diffilleries there, that they formed but a trifling part in some distilleries, and were unknown in others.

At Cologne, upon the banks of the Rhine, a peculiar kind of geneva is made, and is diftinguished by the name of Cologne geneva, in which juniper berries are evidently, both to taste and smell, a principal ingredient: this geneva is highly fragrant to the smell, and when mixed with warm water, is a very agreeable and powerful diuretick and sudorifick.

It is much used in Germany, more especially on the borders of the Rhine, and also in the United Provinces, in such hydropic cases as have their origin in debility, likewise in irregular gout, where the patient is so debilitated that the gouty paroxysm is incomplete.

Duverney fays, that the juniper berries and leffer centaury infused in wine, and the liquor drank as common drink, is attended with the most beneficial effects \*; they are both com-

Memoir l'Academ. des Sciences, l'Ann. 1703.

mon ingredients in variety of medicated ales and wines in this country.

Van Swieten remarks, that he has often observed a strong insusion of juniper berries cure the Ascites and Anasarca, when the disease was not of long standing \*.

The alkaline falts, especially the fixed, are very great diureticks.

Sydenham directs a pound of broom ashes, with a handful or two of wormwood, to be infused in two quarts of Rhenish wine, and orders four ounces of the strained liquor to be taken three times in a day, morning, afternoon and evening, until the dropsy is cured—by perseverance in the use of it, he says, it is attended with the happiest success. Broom ashes have been long recommended in the cure of dropsy; but as its virtues must depend on the alkaline salt, there probably is no difference between this salt and that obtained from any other vegetables by burning.

<sup>\*</sup> Comment, de Aphor. Boerh, vol. iv. p. 248.

<sup>†</sup> Opera omnia, Cap. de Hydrope, p. 497.

The neutral falts likewise, prepared by the mixture of alkalines and acids together, often times exhibit considerable diuretic powers.

As the second records and the best late

Monro relates the case of a person labouring under an universal dropsy, being cured by taking saline draughts, three times in a day, with an anodyne at night, in which was introduced half a drachm of lixivium of tartar, with a dose of jalap and nitre once a week \*. Sal ammoniac and the common Glauber's salts, in small doses, assisted in their operation by exercise in the open air, are powerful diureticks.

THE PROPERTY OF THE PARTY OF TH

The pareira brava, the Cissampelos pareira of Linnæus, has been formerly celebrated as a diuretick and detergent, but seems to have lost its reputation at the present period; this, like many other medicines, has had its day, and is now almost forgotten again. It is at this time more in use in suppression of urine and nephritic complaints than in hydropic diseases: the author has tried it in many dropsical cases, and never saw any good result from the use of it in any one.

<sup>\*</sup> Essay on the Dropfy, p. 65.

The inner bark of elder, Sambucus nigra of Linnæus, has been much praised for its diuretic and cathartic powers, and has been said, with the affishance of an alkaline salt, and addition of a grateful aromatick, insufed for some hours in water, to frequently cure the dropsy.

The Taraxacum, Leontodon Taraxacum of Linnæus, or Dandelion, and the Bardana, Artium Lappa of Linnæus, or Burdock, are likewise considerable articles in modern practice for the cure of hydropic diseases; but, in whatever light confidered, whether as deobstruents or diureticks. they do not appear to be possessed of any great powers, notwithstanding the great character beflowed upon the former by Boerhave: his countrymen, the Dutch, use it much in fallads, but, though the dropfy is a frequent disease in Holland, they never refort to the taraxacum for the cure of it, unless united with other articles: nor in truth can either the dandelion or burdock, in any mode be reforted to with confidence, unless as auxiliaries; in decoction or infusion they afford a vehicle for and affiftance perhaps to medicines of greater power and activity in the cure of dropfical complaints.

Cantharides were greatly recommended by
Hippocrates

Hippocrates in the cure of dropfies, and the use of them has at times prevailed ever fince. Etmuller bestows much praise upon them in dropfical cases, and Groenvelt published a work many years fince upon the fafety of ufing them internally; they are at this time used in some very obstinate cases, in hopes of stimulating the kidnies, but it may be very fairly doubted whether any one has ever witneffed the least good effects from their use in cases of dropfy, when exhibited internally; whilft from the fubtile caustic salt they possess, the boldest practitioners are obliged, by mucilage and other means, to guard with the utmost precaution against the ill effects which may result from the use of them: when applied externally as epispasticks to the sternum in the hydrothorax or afcites, where great pain is complained of at the breast, they have been found of great utility.

Cuprum ammoniaçale is a medicine of the most active and powerful kind, and requires extreme caution in its exhibition: it will, in some cases, succeed where every other known medicine has been tried in vain; where the patient has a soft skin, great laxity of the muscular sibre, great torpor and sluggishness of

the various functions, and perfectly free from any morbid affection of the vifcera, though the dropfy may have continued for years, it will fometimes effect a cure: it has occured fometimes in the author's practice, that from the most trifling doses, in dropsies of long standing, the waters have passed off with such rapidity, that a bandage has been as necessary as after the operation of tapping. A folution of copper in volatile alkaline spirit was first administered by Boerhave, who fays, he cured a confirmed Ascites by the use of it; the author has never observed any ill effects from it, but has always given it with the utmost care and caution: in the cold and phlegmatic only is a cure to be expected from the use of it. Cale, No. 1, in the Appendix,

Cremor tartar, "which is a gentle laxative," in hydropic complaints, generally exhibits more diuretic than purgative qualities, and will even frequently check a diarrhæa existing before: this occasions the author to consider it, when treating of dropsy, as a diuretick, rather than a cathartick.

informed, that the preduced

The use of cremor tartar in hydropic diseases was first published by Manghini, an

Italian physician, and it has for some years back been much used; it is unquestionably a very useful medicine, but it requires twenty times its weight of water or more to dissolve and suspend it, and unless thus dissolved it is useless and inert; for exhibited in a solid form, as in an electuary, it fails universally in its effects; when, therefore, an ounce or more of cremor tartar is to be daily administered, it is a matter of no small difficulty, sometimes to persuade the patient to swallow it, for dropsical patients in general are particularly averse to drinking, from a dread of adding to the disease, notwithstanding the urgency of the thirst, which invariably attends.

This aversion is considerably increased, if informed, that this medicine must be persevered in for many weeks in some cases, before its advantages may be evident: from its long continued use, it has been often known to carry off morbid affections of the viscera, and their effects at the same time: this it effects by its deobstruent powers, and where it fails as a deobstruent, it seldom succeeds as a diuretick, unless in anasarcous cases.

It is more generally useful in this species of

of dropfy (anafarca) than other kinds, and is commonly more effectual in summer than winter; the same may be observed of all other deobstruents, and it explains at the same time what has been oftentimes loosely adverted to by authors before, viz. that dropsies are more easily and frequently cured in warm weather than cold, in summer rather than in winter.

Whilst speaking of the curative effects of cremor tartar, it may be proper to remark, that when long exhibited, and is successful, it always induces great leanness and requires the assistance of diet and medicine to re-establish the accustomed health and strength.

In all cases of dropsy attended with hear, thirst, increased momentum of the blood, quick pulse, &c. cremor tartar dissolved in boiling water, with the addition of a little sugar and a small bit of orange or lemon peel, will prove a most useful and pleasant beverage or common drink; dropsies of this kind appear to be the only cases where a free, unlimited and indiscriminate use of watery liquors can ever be proper, unless where diluents may be necessary during the operation of the more active medicines.

It

It has been the general opinion of all phyficians, as well ancient as modern, till within these very sew years, that little or no drink should be permitted in dropsical diseases, unless in such cases as are attended with increased momentum, &c. Sydenham, our English Hippocrates, was accustomed to direct his hydropic patients to frequently moisten their mouths with cold water, acidulated with the spirit of vitriol, or by way of deceiving the thirst, to keep a piece of lemon or some tamarinds constantly in their mouths.

Many instances have occurred, it is true, of dropsies of various kinds having been cured by the drinking even of cold water in large quantities, and on the other hand, there are many well authenticated cures upon record, by total abstinence from liquids for a time.

Galen observes, that he has seen several dropsical patients cured by abstaining from drink for sisteen days together\*. Pliny, relates a cure by the same method . Doctor Mead mentions two cases of Ascites being cured by avoiding drinking: allaying or deceiving the

<sup>\*</sup> Lib. vi. §. 4. Comment. 8.

<sup>+</sup> Lib. 7. Cap. xviii.

thirst by the use of acids \*. Vanswieten likewise mentions a case from Marcellus Donatus, of a man, who, given over by his physicians, afterwards recovered by a total abstinence from liquors for the space of a whole year \*. Hildanus gives another instance of the cure of an Ascites by abstinence from drink for the space of a month.

By taking the medium between the two extremes, on the one hand allowing the free use of acidulated diluents, cremor tartar drink, &c. in fuch hydropic diseases as are attended with inflammatory fymptoms, great thirst, &c. and where the patients are of a strong muscular habit; and, on the other hand, where the patients are naturally of a foft, relaxed habit, debilitated by prior disease or old age, to refrain from aqueous liquors, and deceive the thirst as much as possible, by having at times such articles in their mouths as increase the saliva, will perhaps be more universally beneficial and advantageous, than the indifcriminate and unlimited use of diluents, or as positively denying them in every case of dropsy which may prefent.

<sup>\*</sup> Monita Medica, cap. va.

<sup>+</sup> Vol. iv. p. 268.

# [ 74 ]

To return from the digression, occasioned by considering the free indulgence of liquids in hydropic diseases of every kind, and even without restraint, to the consideration of the remaining principal diureticks.

Tobacco was, some few years since, introduced to public notice, by Dr. Fowler of York, as a powerful diuretick and active medicine in the cure of dropsical diseases, and it has, in some slight cases, when not of long standing, particularly of the anasarcous kind, been sound useful: but, in the internal exhibition of tobacco, so much caution is necessary, and its exhibition is so often attended with sickness, vertigo, cold clammy sweats, and other disagreeable symptoms, that its use in hydropic complaints is by no means general, nor ever will perhaps, as there are various medicines much more efficacious in dropsies; it has been found more useful in dysuries.

The Digitalis, Digitalis purpurea of Linnaus, or Foxglove, has been used for ages in the cure of hydropic diseases; blended with various other articles, it has been handed down to successive generations, and has been invariably the basis of all the receipts for the cure of drop-

fy in the hands of different families in many parts of the kingdom; these receipts were generally carefully concealed by the different possessor, and notwithstanding some of them dealt out their medicines upon a somewhat extensive scale, it is more than probable they never varied the compound, considering perhaps any deviation from the old family receipt, as a deterioration.

It was first introduced to general knowledge and public practice by a very celebrated physician of Birmingham some sew years ago, who published a treatise upon the subject, and related a number of cases where it had been tried under his direction, in several of which it was successful, when other medicines had sailed; he sound it more particularly useful in the Hydrothorax, where it oftentimes succeeded when other medicines of established repute had been unsuccessful.

When first announced to the public as posfessing extraordinary diuretic powers, it soon came into general practice, but, at this period, is by no means so common, owing probably to the distressing sickness and violent vomiting it frequently excites when given in such small doses, doses, even as a grain or two, therefore in very delicate habits it can scarce be used at all with safety; during its operation plenty of small diluting liquors are directed.

Notwithstanding great precaution is required in its exhibition, by those who may not be sufficiently aware of its effects, yet in the hands of the skilful, and managed with judgment, it is a very valuable medicine. Medicines which are violent in their operation, in small doses, always call for great skill and caution in their exhibition, as the powers of many of them may be considerably varied by the different ways of preparation made use of by different people.

Squill, Scilla maritima of Linnæus, though last in the list of diureticks, is perhaps the first in virtues and extent of powers; it has been celebrated for ages on account of its virtues in the cure of the various kinds of hydropic diseases, nor has it ever at any period lost its same; notwithstanding it has been exhibited various ways and in various forms, as the whim or caprice of the physician might lead him to direct, yet its effects are in every form extolled by all medical writers, so much so indeed,

indeed, that it is unnecessary to enter into a diffusive eulogium on the virtues of the squill, as no medical practitioner can be unacquainted with its exalted character.

tion of it in fuch large defet as to ever It may be used with the utmost safety and advantage in every kind and stage of dropsy, (unless when a fixed pain in the sternum attends, in that case it sometimes aggravates the symptoms) in either fex, or at any age; and, by means of an adjunct, its powers may be directed according to the attendant symptoms of the disease or the will of the physician; given in large doses it proves emetic, combined with mercury or other adjuncts, it may be directed as a deobstruent in the removal of diseases of the viscera, whilst the vinegar, in which the dried root has been infused, combined with some cordial water, proves a most powerful diuretick. Dermi betratik endlol

Most physicians recommend the use of squill, in quantities sufficient to excite strong nausea or even vomiting, under the idea of increasing its diuretic effects: some, indeed, have gone so far as to say, it never succeeds, unless attended with vomiting, when administered in dropsical complaints.

In

reserved was neversely

In the numerous hydropic diseases which have come under the author's observation at different periods, no beneficial consequences have ever appeared to result from the exhibition of it in such large doses as to excite vomiting, but rather the reverse; its diuretic powers appear greatly diminished, whilst the patient, infinitely distressed by the violence of pain it excites in the stomach, prior to vomiting taking place, becomes languid, and feels himself much debilitated afterwards, both in strength and spirits; a circumstance commonly attendant upon violent or long continued vomiting, as it is a debilitating power.

The squill, as before observed, may by means of an adjunct, be directed to act as the will or judgment of the physician may incline him. When the author uses squill, he generally follows a method peculiar to himself; but in whatever way he uses it, he avoids, with the most sedulous care and attention, its action upon the stomach as an emetick, more especially where the disease originates in, or is attended with great debility, whether the consequence of prior disease, advance of life, or any other cause.

a min (0000 and other than

## [ 79 ]

It is ever a leading principle with the author, not to excite such sensations in the stomach as may diminish the appetite, but according to the age, constitution, stage or species of dropsy, when he administers the squill, or any other powerful diuretick, to give them in small doses, and direct their powers more immediately to the kidnies.

Exhibited in this manner, and affisted by tonicks, the author has frequently cured, where the whole materia medica has been ransacked in vain by the most eminent of the faculty: the squill is thus a good deobstruent, and likewise precludes the necessity of catharticks, as it generally keeps the body sufficiently open. See Cases 6, 7, in the Appendix.

Having thus sufficiently enlarged upon the subject of diureticks, particularly those most celebrated in the cure of dropsical diseases, the fourth general mode, of curing by medicine, remains to be considered: a few words only will be sufficient on the article of

#### DIAPHORETICKS.

No secretion, in hydropic diseases, is so difficult to excite as the cutaneous one, and L 2 is

is rarely attempted, except in the anafarca: in cases of this sort, the effusion into the cavities of the cellular membrane, will be less, in proportion to the quantity of perspirable matter, carried off by the pores of the skin: therefore, perspiration is to be promoted by exercise, friction, alkaline salts, sixed, as well as volatile, neutral salts and mixtures, antimonial medicines, and by the gently stimulating diaphoreticks of every kind.

Opium is likewise a powerful diuretick and sudorisick, especially if united with mercury or antimony, or combined with the fixed alkaline salts; but, it must be likewise remembered, that opium, in whatever way exhibited, excites thirst, and is productive of statulency and costiveness.

The operations reforted to, either to affift the cure of hydropic complaints, or as the neans of prolonging life, (when the various and principal medicines, before enumerated, have disappointed the hopes of practitioner and patient, when the most powerful hydropic medicines have been tried in vain, and where, from the quantity of effused fluids, and other circumstances,

cumstances, life is in the utmost danger) reamain to be mentioned.

In the Anasarca, whether alone or combined with dropsy of the belly or chest, it is very common to scarify the seet and legs, and from the various outlets made by the scarificators, afford means for the water, deposited in the cellular membrane, to pass off; but in the performance of this apparently trisling operation, great care is necessary that the incisions are no more than just through the skin, and that afterwards, by the application of warm spirituous somentations and digestives, a gangrene is prevented; yet, notwithstanding the utmost precaution, a mortification will frequently take place.

In the Ascites, when the belly is so much distended from the accumulated fluids within, (which in proportion to their quantum obstruct the motion of the diaphragm), as to threaten the patient with suffocation, and every medicine has been tried for relief without effect, tapping becomes necessary as a palliative, and in some sew cases it proves a radical cure. The operation would probably succeed more generally, if submitted to in the earlier stages

of the disease; but the idea of it is so extremely distressing to the patient, while the most distant hopes remain of removing the disease without having recourse to it, that sew can be prevailed on to undergo it, till dire necessity compels them, to prevent suffocation.

A favourable iffue, to this operation, may be more rationally expected when the discase is not of long standing, when the result of debility, the consequence of profuse evacuations, or the effect of suddenly drinking large quantities of cold aqueous liquors, at the time the party was overheated, or in the more early periods of life.

But in cases where there is a morbid affection of the abdominal viscera, this operation is productive of no more than temporary relief, and ought never to be recommended until every possible chance has been afforded to medicine.

In the Ovarium Dropfy, where medicines are ineffectual, and very often extremely prejudicial; after the rupture of the cyst and the accumulated sluids are discharged into the cavity of the abdomen, tapping has in some few instances

instances succeeded very well, and the cure afterwards perfected by bandage, medicines, and the greatest attention to regimen: but such cures are by no means frequent. See Case, No. 3, in the Appendix.

It oftentimes happens that varices and congestions of blood take place in the cutaneous veins of the abdomen, which in some cases are very much distended: these, when it becomes necessary to perform the operation, must be carefully avoided.

and the more of the boldward about

In hydropic patients, afflicted with rupture, the water fometimes enters the fac, and in many cases, where no rupture exists, the waters distend the navel even to the danger of bursting, especially in women, and it has sometime occured that an incision there has been successful, but it ought notwithstanding never to be attempted, as it is extremely difficult to draw off the waters by the navel, and a wound in that part is seldom cured: besides, the possibility of occasioning an umbilical rupture necessarily precludes the attempt.

By the means of a bandage or roller applied round the body of the patient prior to

the operation, and drawn tighter as the water passes off, the ill consequences which might attend the sudden removal of the water from the viscera is avoided, whose vessels being before much compressed, are easily dilated, and readily yield to the propelled circulating fluids: hence, a smaller portion of them than usual is carried to the head and upper extremities, by which means the vessels of the brain may collapse, and a fatal syncope ensue.

After the operation, the patient is frequently much troubled with gripings, and confiderable pains in the abdomen, and it is neceffary upon that account to give an anodyne, by way of preventative; and, in the course of two or three days afterwards, should the patient be costive, it will be proper to direct a purge, and repeat it as often as may be required.

convey or victorian inches

Should it happen that the fluids, within the abdomen, are too thick to pass through the canula of the trocar, or if hydatids are mixed with the water, the orifice may be dilated, and should any part of the intestines or omentum obstruct the end of the pipe, they must be re-

moved, gently as possible, with the end of a probe.

As foon as possible after the waters are drawn off, the dressings should be applied to the wound, to prevent the admission of air into the cavity of the abdomen, as sometimes fatal consequences ensue from the neglect. Vanswieten relates a case from Benevoli, wherein it was evident, that the too free admission of the air, after the operation, occasioned the death of the patient: upon opening the body after death, a small obstruction in the concave part of the liver was found indeed, but the whole of the peritonæum was putresied, and a considerable quantity of pus found in the cavity of the abdomen.\*

Some years ago the author faw the operation performed upon two patients, where, from the age and strength of the parties, with cause and state of the disease considered, the most state ing hopes were entertained of success; the waters discharged appeared bland, and totally destitute of acrimony, yet both died three or four days afterwards; upon diffection, nearly

<sup>\*</sup> Differtazioni di Anton. Benevoli, p. 126.

the same appearances occurred as in the case quoted by the learned commentator, most probably occasioned by the too free admission of the external air; and, according to Vanswieten, this consequence, the effect of inattention, has given occasion to many celebrated physicians to condemn the operation.\*

It was a practice some time back, after the operation, and the waters were drawn off, to throw astringent injections into the cavity of the abdomen, under the idea of constringing the orifices of the exhalants, and thus diminishing suture effusion, but the practice has been long laid aside, from the bad consequences attending it.

A bandage or roller is always recommended by the author to be conftantly worn after the waters are discharged, in hopes of at least retarding, if not happy enough to prevent the return of the disease; and by every possible means that diet and medicines afford, endeavouring to prevent further deposition, at the same time, by the mildest diureticks carrying

<sup>\*</sup> Commentar. de Aphor. Boerhav. vol. iv. pag. 242.

off any little effusion that may happen. See Case, No. 3, in the Appendix.

But if, notwithstanding the application of bandage, the use of medicines, regimen, exercise, and every possible attention to prevent the water re-accumulating, the belly should again swell, and the patient be in danger of suffocation, the operation must be repeated, and that as often as the urgency of the case requires it: thus life may be preserved, in some instances, for many months, or even years; and it has happened, "though very rarely," that a radical cure has been effected after several repetitions of the operation.

In the Hydrothorax, or Dropfy of the Breaft, the same principles equally apply, on which other species are treated, though the Paraceutesis is not so frequently resorted to, as in the Ascites, indeed the disease is not always so evident; but where it has been precisely ascertained, and the operation had recourse to, it has, in many instances, and much more frequently than in the dropsy of the abdomen, proved a complete cure, owing perhaps to the lungs not being so frequently affected, as the abdominal viscera.

M 2

The operation in hydropic diseases, which may be eventually necessary, being sufficiently discussed, it may not be improper to take some notice of the different methods to be pursued in the same disease, when arising from different causes.

The mode of cure to be adopted where the disease arises from, or is accompanied with inflammation, or increased momentum of the blood, has been already mentioned, (see Case, No. 4, in the Appendix) and it has likewise been before stated, that hydropic diseases, proceeding from polypi, must always prove satal, as medicines cannot act upon the cause.

In such cases of dropsy as are occasioned by tumours within the cavity of the body, which from the size, weight and compression upon the veins, impede the return of the blood to the heart; the only medicines that can be administered with the most distant prospect of success, (for all hopes of effecting a cure in such cases must be very weak) are mercurials and diureticks, possessed likewise of a deobstruent power, by the use of which, should the causes of the accumulation not be entirely dispersed, the effect may possibly be removed,

and by the use of tonicks the system may be strengthened, (should debility have taken place) and the surther essusion in some degree prevented.

Where the disease is occasioned by the compression of tumours upon the veins in the extremities or neck, they ought to be extirpated by the knife, if it can be done with safety.

When arising from tumours in, or increased thickness of the coats of the veins, as it is feldom evident, but upon diffection, medicines cannot be employed but upon the general principle of endeavouring to remove obstruction.

In such cases as arise from obstruction in the mesenteric glands, or schirrhus of the liver, mercury, squills, salts, soap, cremor tartar, and similar medicines, are proper, as they act as deobstruents in removing the obstructions, and, at the same time, as diureticks in discharging their effects.

When pregnancy, especially in the latter months, occasions varicose and ædematous swell-

ings of the legs, thighs, and labia pudenda in women, from the pressure of the gravid uterus upon the vena cava, though inconvenient and troublesome, they are seldom of serious import, and are best relieved by a frequent recumbent posture, gentle laxatives, the use of the slesh-brush, light diet and moderate exercise; this is all that is in general necessary, for the disease commonly disappears soon after delivery.

The ædematous swellings of the lower extremities, common to those whose occupations in life occasion them to be upon their feet great part of the day, are relieved by frictions with the slesh-brush, thus assisting the too languad circulation of the sluids through the veins, and removing one cause of essusion; stimulating likewise, at the same time, the lymphaticks to the absorption of the extravalated sluids: if there is any debility, the system ought to be strengthened.

Where the disease arises from the suppression of periodical discharges, reference must be at all times had to the cause of suppression; which, if possible, must be removed, and the discharge restored. In such cases, the dropsy generally disappears without surther assistance

PRISI

met or a system when the transfer is the second

of medicine: but, when this cannot be effected, all that can be attempted, is to remove the effect the suppression has induced, and endeavouring, by every means, to prevent further deposition.

When the obstruction is occasioned by, or attended with laxity of the solids, a nourishing diet, with such medicines as tend to promote digestion and brace up the body, ought to be employed, and the effused sluids carried off by gentle diureticks.

When hydropic diseases are the consequences of chlorosis, cachexy, &c. where the sick, in general, possess but little sensibility, united with weakness, a generous diet should be directed, with as much exercise as can be borne without satigue; sailing, likewise, is oftentimes advantageous, as it frequently provokes vomiting. In cases of this description, emeticks are more particularly called for, as by their agitation of the abdominal viscera, they dislodge and prevent further stagnation of bile or mucous humours, which are apt to accumulate in the stomach and bowels, and impair digestion.

Where hydropic diseases are the effects of nervous atrophy, light nutritious food, in small quan-

quantities at a time only, will be proper; and the only medicines that can be administered with advantage, are the gently diuretic, stomachic and restorative.

Paralytic affections shew themselves by a fudden loss of tone and vital power in certain parts of the body, and are generally attended, more or less, by dropsical complaints, which diminish or disappear according as the strength and tone of the part affected is restored; but, when the attendant effusion increases considerably, it may, in many cases, be necessary to attend first to that and afterwards to the paralytic complaints. Electricity, which has been sometimes found useful in incipient dropfies, is in fuch cases particularly eligible and useful, as well as friction upon the palfied limb, with the fielsh brush, flannel, or coarse cloth; at the same time administering such medicines as will invigorate and strengthen the body, and gentle diureticks to carry off the effused fluids.

When walking, riding, and other active exercises are given up in consequence of advanced life, dropsies frequently supervene, not from that cause alone, but the debility incident

muio

to old age: in these cases, such kind of passive exercise, as the patient can bear, should be directed, with frictions to accelerate the motion of the fluids, and prevent them stagnating in the cellular membrane, with light, nourishing diet, and the use of such stimulating dieteticks as are necessary and useful in torpid habits, such as mustard, horse-radish, &c. with the free use of wine, more especially Madeira and Rhenish. At the same time diureticks must be called in aid to carry off the water, and tonicks and restoratives to prevent surther essuion.

me un Junea ede elstracións

Most asthmatic people die dropsical, let the asthma originate from what cause it may; this is a disease more particularly attached to advanced life. In dropsies, therefore, attendant upon asthmas, the mildest diureticks are observed to be the most useful, if administered with such medicines, at the same time, as ast as tonicks and restoratives; for, by that means, the increased action of the lymphaticks is excited, the accumulated sluids discharged, and, by increasing the strength of the system, further deposition is prevented.

When dropfy is the consequence of the gouty paroxysm being ill formed and incomplete

and the horsone which could but be called

plete from the debility of the patient, cordials, bitters, tonicks, and the free use of wine are necessary to give additional impulse to the vital principle, and the accumulated sluids carried off by the gentlest means possible. See Cases, 8 and 9, in the Appendix.

When hydropic diseases are the consequences of sever, or other acute diseases, long continued or protracted beyond their usual period, when the action of the heart is much diminished and great debility induced, it will be necessary to stimulate the heart to act with more vigour, to restore the general system by a light nutritive diet, and discharge the estimed shuids at the same time by the mildest diureticks.

con affirmation of a characteristic con-

An opportunity has been before afforded, in the early part of this Effay, of afferting and proving that from the too copious and hafty drinking of thin watery liquors, even in health, dropfy may be produced, as the watery particles of the blood become thus too abundant, by which, debility of the folids is occasioned, and the humours which ought to be expelled the body are deposited and accumulated in the various cavities; hence, paleness of countenance,

nance, the body becomes weak, languid and torpid, and the folid parts flaccid from the want of nourishment, owing to the blood it-felf being, as it were, dissolved: thus, from the general relaxation induced, the vessels are incapable of their usual resistance, and the sluids are poured into the cavities.

Secretarios de encerciarios de la contraction

Unquestionably, when a great quantity of cold water or fmall beer is drank fuddenly, while the body is hot, it may occasion obstructions, or pave the way for a schirrhus of some of the abdominal viscera, the removal of which has been already treated of; but, where too great tenuity of the fluids only is apparently occasioned, and dropfy produced, the mode of cure will of course be different: it would prove futile to attempt curing the disease by drastick purges or violent emeticks, for the fluids being rendered so extremely thin, and the vis vite proportionably diminished, they ooze through all the extremities of the exhalants, into the different cavities, in confequence, in some degree of the debility induced, which the debilitating effects of emeticks and purgatives tend to increase.

In fuch cases medicines ought to be ad-N 2 ministered,

ed has edicined a solo dades toidn accimen

ministered, which from their stimulus will act immediately upon the kidnies, and excite them to an increase of action, to exonerate themselves from the deluge of water with which they are oppressed and overwhelmed, giving at the same time cordials and tonicks, that the heart may be stimulated to stronger vibrations, and the general strength restored. See Case, No. 1, in the Appendix.

definition of the state of the

Scanty, poor, meagre diet, occasions a poverty in the fluids, which become thin, pale and watery; the consequence is debility of the solids and langour of the vital power, hence dropsies of various kinds take place; but, in general, a more nourishing diet and tonicks will remove the disease: if evacuants are sound necessary, diureticks are the only class requisite to perfect a cure.

Dyspepsia, or depraved digestion, is frequently an attendant upon the dropsy, but it is likewise sometimes the cause, and the dropsy the effect of the debility induced; in both cases, the cure rests upon the same principles, the restoring the tone and strength of the stomach, which is best done by tonicks, and the effused

effused fluids carried off at the same time by the use of divircities.

Heldrad graffyl ant

Hydropic diseases, caused by sudden have morrhages, or great evacutions of blood, may, perhaps, be as much ascribed to the debility suddenly brought on, as the too watery state of the blood: be that as it may, the only method to be pursued in the cure must be to invigorate the system by the most nourishing diet, bracing the solids by tonicks, restoratives, and gentle exercise, and by administering such medicines, to discharge the effused sluids, as will, by their operation, least disturb the animal economy.

Dropfy frequently occurs among women from too great menstrual discharges; this sometimes happens when they arrive towards sive and forty years of age: when an immoderate slux takes place at this period of life, copious bleedings and astringents are commonly resorted to, which increase the tendency to effusion; but, if restrained by gentle laxatives, cooling saline medicines, anodynes, rest and light sparing diet, the dropfy would be prevented; however, when it has taken place, it will generally be found most conducive to the restor-

other attraction of translation to

ation of the health, to carry off the effusion by diureticks, and at the same time to strengthen the system by tonicks. See Case, No. 10, in the Appendix.

The state of the s

A violent flooding sometimes ensues after delivery, which in its consequence is oftentimes followed by hydropic complaints; attempting to carry off the effused suids by emeticks and strong purges, is a certain means of making the disease worse, though frequently done; the waters ought to be evacuted by the mildest means possible, by gentle diureticks, combined or alternated with tonicks; thus at the same time exciting absorption, and checking further effusion by strengthening the habit. See Case, No. 11, in the Appendix.

When the disease is brought on by long continued diarrhæas, dysenteries, or the too frequent use of drastick purgatives, if the former should yet continue, they ought by every possible means to be checked, and the latter to be discontinued; the general strength of the body must be invigorated by nutritive restorative diet, assisted by stomachic tonic medicines and exercise, and the effused shuids evacuated by the use of diureticks.

combined the beginning to have been a stone oct mont

When hydropic effusions are the confequences of free and long continued use of strong mercurials, (as is oftentimes the case in venereal complaints) the blood is diffolved, by which atonia and debility of the mufcular fibre is induced; hence the refiftance to the fluids being diminished, they escape into the cavities with the greater facility, by reason of their disfolved state; and the lymphaticks, partaking of the general weakness, absorb less than usual: here, as in all other cases, arising from laxity of the folids, debility of the vital principle or watery state of the blood, the greatest attention should be paid to the diet, which ought to be of the most agglutinant, nutritive and restorative kind, with the use of warm aromaticks, (unless contra-indicated by fever or other circumstances,) gentle exercise, and the waters carried off by diureticks combined, or alternated with tonicks.

Having thus curforily discussed the various modes of cure to be pursued, according to the cause which may have given rise to the disease, it will be obvious, that in the author's opinion, diureticks are the only class of evacuants which

rasioir

can

can be properly reforted to, in the expectation of curing hydropic difeases.

Emeticks, it is true, may in some instances be usefully administered, "but these cases, comparatively considered, are few," they almost universally tend to increase the debility already existing, and dropsies are always accompanied by debility, and frequently originate from it.

In the general state of hydropic patients, before described, emeticks are certainly objectionable; in the earlier stages of those dropsies, which are sometimes accompanied by great inflammation, they may be injurious, unless preceded by venæsection; and, in the latter stages of the disease, from whatever cause arising, they must be extremely hazardous, as dropsical patients are particularly subject to hæmorrhage.

Purgatives, as commonly directed in this disease, that is, the strong, rough, drastic purges, are always hurtful: it is true, that they procure most copious evacuations, but the patient, so far from being relieved, is, by every violent evacuation this way, made worse; if measured the day before taking one of these violent

violent doses, and again measured the day after the operation, it will commonly be found that the abdomen is as large as ever, and not in frequently increased in fize; indeed, it is wonderful, a practice so seldom, if ever attended with success, should have been so long persisted in.

Whatever debilitating effects emeticks may be attended with, drastic purges posses, in a tenfold degree; besides, they increase the thirst to the inexpressible distress of the patient.

It has been the practice of some, or at least it has been suggested in their writings, when speaking of purgatives, in the cure of dropsical complaints, to rest after discharging part of the waters, and when an accession of strength has been acquired by diet and tonicks, to renew the purgatives and draw off the remainder of the accumulated water, and it is observed, that the patient is less exhausted by pursuing this method, than by first evacuating all the water, and afterwards strengthening the system.

What

What is this, but a tacit acknowledgment of the debilitating effects of the more violent hydragogue purgatives? yet, notwithstanding, if the plan proposed could be carried into effect, with equal facility with which it is directed, it would be very well both for the doctor and the patient; but alas, the effusion continues going forward, after the operation of such violent medicines, with increased force, notwithstanding any increase of strength to the sick, which may be attempted, and before the waste of strength, occasioned by the purgatives, is restored by diet or tonicks, the work is to do over again, and the patient less able to support it.

Unquestionably it is a desideratum, "and has been long so," of the highest importance in the cure of hydropic diseases, to blend such medicines together, as without disturbing the animal economy, will promote the re-absorption and discharge of the accumulated sluids, and at the same time strengthen the system; this, though long wished for, rather than expected, the author slatters himself he has, in some measure, attained: for this purpose he unites diureticks with tonicks, and will, at a future period, enlarge upon and treat more fully

fully of the medicines he uses, which, in some cases, are peculiarly his own; and, on the other hand, he oftentimes administers medicines of long established fame, and universally known, fuch as fquills, &c. but his mode of using them, and other diureticks, is, he believes, peculiar to himself; he directs their force to the kidnies, and cautiously avoids their acting as emetics, which the more powerful diureticks are apt to do when given in large doses, and to counteract this tendency more effectually, he directs a medicine to be taken, once, twice, or thrice a day, according to circumstances, which at the fame time it blunts the emetic properties of the diureticks, wonderfully strengthens the general fystem.

This medicine, (the Vegetable Effence) though he at present with-holds it from the publick knowledge, he will, in a future publication communicate: reasons, which would, if known, sufficiently justify his conduct, he will hereaster lay before the Publick; he is at the same time well aware, that secresy of this sort, may expose him to the charge of empiricism with some, but he throws himself upon the candour of the community at large, and will only observe, that it is the result of near thirty years O 2

practice and experiment, great part of which time was folely appropriated to the discovery of a medicine, capable of effectually affishing the operation of others, in the cure of dropsy, and preventing its return; for it is a fact universally known and acknowledged, that dropsies are extremely apt to recur again; patients once afflicted with it, are more particularly subject to relapse, than in most other diseases.

Both these good effects, he will venture to affert, the Vegetable Essence will produce, and it will be found of the utmost importance in every kind of dropsy or debility, whether constitutional, arising from irregularity, excess, decline of life, the effect of long sickness, paralytic affections, assume, hæmorrhage, or watery state of the fluids.

It will be found to strengthen the stomach and whole alimentary canal, promote digestion, expel wind, animate the too languid circulation, exhibitante the spirits, afford a genial warmth to the whole system, and invigorate even old age, without exciting either heat or thirst.

By the use of this medicine, this Vegeta-

ble Essence, even in a less perfect state than what repeated experiments and long practice have brought it to, combined or alternated with diureticks, dropsies have been cured when given over by the most eminent practitioners of medicine.

It is within these few months only, that the author first entertained a thought of bringing forward, before the Publick, his mode of curing hydropic diseases; of late years his time has been much engaged abroad, nor had he ever thought of thus committing himfelf to the censures of the medical world, till sometime after his return to England; had the intention occurred to him fooner, he could have corroborated the superiority of his practice, by an infinite number of cases which have been under his cognizance and direction, but as many of his notes are loft, two or three of the cases in the Appendix are written from memory, but, he believes, they are perfectly correct; the others are from notes taken at the time, without the most distant idea of ever publishing them.

The Fellowice, we are the controlled for the court of the controlled and the controlled a

## APPENDIX.

It may perhaps be necessary here to repeat, what has been observed in the Introduction, that several of the subjoined cases had
been long under the direction of some of the
most eminent of the profession, that they had
been treated with the strongest, most powerful
and active medicines the Materia Medica afforded, directed by all the skill, scientific education, practice and experience could add; yet
several of these cases (abandoned as incurable)
yielded afterwards, under the direction of the
author, to the same medicines as had before
proved inessectual.

### CASE I.

E. R. aged twenty-nine, regular, and in perfect health, drank, during the course of a warm day in the summer time, a very large quantity of cold water, and in three or four days afterwards found herself unable to make her stays meet, without having any idea of being dropsical; but as her waist became larger every day, and her legs and feet swelled like-

wife, the informed her mistress, who fent for the apothecary of the family: he found, upon examination, evident fluctuation in the abdomen, and immediately put her under a course of the roughest drastic purges, such as jalap, fcammony, gamboge, &c. At the end of fix weeks, from the first attack of the disease, her abdomen was fo large, and her lower extremities fo much swelled, that the could no longer do any work in the house, and was therefore fent to the Westminster Infirmary, where she continued an in-patient twelve or thirteen weeks. when the was discharged without receiving any, benefit, though she took the strongest medicines which could be devised: in two months afterwards, other complaints supervening, she was again admitted into the Westminster Infirmary, and continued there fourteen weeks longer, when the was a fecond time discharged, worse, as to dropfy, than when the entered, as the abdomen was fo much distended that it was with difficulty the could fleep in a recumbent pofition.

In a month or five weeks afterwards, the gained admission into St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where she remained seven or eight weeks, and was, at the expiration of that time, discharg-

ed on refusing to be tapped. In ten days after her dismission from Saint Bartholomew's she went into Saint Thomas's Hospital, where she remained eight weeks, but was, at the expiration of that time, so extremely ill, that they would not suffer her to remain longer unless she consented to be tapped; which refusing, she was accordingly discharged.

tie of the kilinias might be probably owing

Nine weeks afterwards, the again obtained admission into the Westminster Insimary, where she continued ten weeks; but as her dropsical complaints bassled every attempt to cure, and refusing here, as at the other hospitals to be tapped, she was discharged a third time: from this period she continued extremely ill, resigned to the sate which apparently awaited her, as she was obstinately determined not to undergo any operation.

It was some weeks she thus languished: when, she applied to the author, she was swelled to an enormous size, was universally anasarcous, and the shuids accumulated within the cavity of the abdomen, had protruded the navel so much, that apprehensions were entertained of its bursting: the cutaneous, urinary and alvine excretions had been very scanty during the whole

whole time of the disease, (near three years) the discharge of sæces not more than once in seven or eight days unless by purgatives, nor had there been any appearance of the menstrual discharge from the first attack.

regulation at the religion being

Perfuaded there was no morbid affection of the viscera, and conjecturing that the inertia of the kidnies might be probably owing to other causes, as well as compression from the furrounding waters, a very few drops of a faturated folution of copper, in volatile alkaline spirits, was administered fix or seven successive mornings, when the accummulated fluids began to pass off by the kidnies, in so rapid a manner, that the patient was obliged to be swathed to prevent the ill effects which might arise from fo fudden a discharge: the Vegetable Essence (as mentioned more particularly, pages 103, 104, 105) had been directed three times a day, from the first day of her being under the author's care, which in the course of the week had much increased her appetite and ftrength: in ten days from her first taking these medicines, she was reduced fixteen inches and a half in the abdomen, all the waters there, as well as in the extremities, totally difappeared in a few days more, her spirits returned turned with her strength and appetite; the sallow, cadaverous bloated countenance changed to a more healthy hue, and in the course of the month, during which time her menses had returned, she was in perfect health and experienced no return, though, by way of prevention, she continued the use of the Vegetable Effence for a few weeks.

# CASE II.

cases and some to each hollow, at time been about

W. L. eleven years of age, a very healthy fine youth, when warm with play in the fummer, drank near three quarts of small beer, as haftily as he could draw it, that it might escape the observation of his parents; he became flightly feverish the same evening, but the fever left him the next day: in two or three days he became dropfical, and filled fo fast that his parents, justly alarmed, called in a very eminent physician in the city, under whose direction he took, in quick fuccession, the strongest medicines: in a month from the first of the hydropic appearances, fo rapid had been the effusion, that he was obliged to be tapped; in four or five weeks more he was again as much diffended as when he underwent the operation, which was again proposed, but the youth would VIOCIAV

would not submit; he nevertheless consented to a puncture in the scrotum, which, as well as the penis, was prodigiously distended.

The day following the author was confulted, and found him universally anasarcous, his face so much puffed and enlarged, that scarce a feature could be distinguished, his hands and arms so swelled, that it was impossible, by any exertion, to bend a joint or bring either hand to his head, he passed no more than a spoonful or two of water by the natural passages in the course of twenty-four hours; he had no appetite, an insatiable thirst, was exceedingly comatose, with cough, and such difficulty of breathing that he could not lie down even for a moment,

During the twenty-four hours, fince the ferotum had been punctured, it had discharged more than two quarts of water, it was supposed, but he found no relief; upon enquiry, the father informed the author, that his son had taken strong emeticks and purgatives prior and subsequent to the operation, but could not help noticing, he said, that he always appeared increased in size the day after the operation of those rough medicines.

of day: is two or thire

Variety of medicines were directed, which, though they procured an increase of the urine, made no alteration in the fize of the boy; when a preparation of the squill in small doses, with a table spoonful of Vegetable Essence twice a day, was ordered, which, in a few days, caused five pints of water to pass in the twenty-four hours; at the expiration of fix weeks, he was much reduced in size, and his countenance had reassumed, in some degree, the human face divine; the most unfavourable symptoms had become milder, the penis and scrotum were, as in health, he could sleep in bed with his head somewhat raised, and his strength and spirits were likewise better.

Thus he was going on apparently well, and there were well grounded hopes of a cure; but, whilst his father was diverting him during the evening with a game of cards, the child jumped suddenly from his chair, whilst he was dealing, cried out he was dying, and instantly expired.

The body was afterwards opened, there was no water in the cheft or abdomen, but the omentum was fomewhat enlarged, and the stomach thicker than usual: there was about three

three ounces of water within the ventricles of the brain, and the veffels appeared turgid with blood.

### sensiti side CASE III.

a preparation of the fquill in finall dofer.

tation a day, was in Fred, witch, in a few flavor,

Miss H. aged thirty three, much deformed, became obstructed in consequence of a severe cold and neglect at the usual period, and soon afterwards discovered her legs begin to swell, especially at night: a short time afterwards observing an enlargement of the abdomen, and likewise much troubled with a cough, dissirulty of breathing, &c. &c. she called in the affistance of an eminent surgeon, who gave her the strongest emetic, cathartic, and hydropic medicines.

Notwithstanding the powerful operation of all these medicines, she continued filling, till by the pressure of the sluids upon the diaphragm she was unable to lie down, and at length daily growing worse, she was tapped, and fifteen quarts of water drawn off.

them were well arounded bogoes of a cure t box.

In a few weeks she filled again, and then became the patient of the author; variety of emmenagogue and diuretic medicines were tried,

The body was alanyands opened there

now accumulated in such quantity, and the symptoms so urgent, that there was a necessity for the operation being shortly repeated, unless medicines took a speedy effect. She had already taken of the colchicum digitalis, &c. &c. the squill had likewise been tried in vain, but was once more resorted to in a different form, with frequent doses of the Vegetable Effence, as there was considerable debility.

At the expiration of seven or eight days, a diuresis, or discharge of urine took place, and in a few days more her bulk was much diminished; the anasarcous swellings of her legs and feet entirely disappeared, but there was still evident suctuation in the abdomen, and this could never be entirely got rid of, which was of the less consequence she thought, as she could rest in her bed, and attend her domestic concerns as usual.

From the moment the diurefis took place, the abdomen was directed to be swathed, and the bandage constantly worn afterwards. The patient was put upon a nourishing diet, with directions to persevere in the use of the Vegetable Essence, and now and then a dose of the preparation

## [ 116 ]

preparation of squills, if she found herself increase in size. By attention to these rules, she remained free from any further accumulation so long as the author knew her. About four months afterwards she removed to a distance.

# CASE IV.

ready taken of the colobleum digitality btc. bcc

I. W. a very fine healthy boy, when a year old languished and became dropsical, in confequence of difficult dentition, attended with diarrhœa, &c. The family apothecary was applied to, who finding the belly and legs greatly fwelled, without attending to the cause of the difease, ordered the child strong purging powders, with half a grain of calomel in each dofe, which necessarily increased the debility already induced by the diarrhœa; in less than three weeks the child was so ill that life was despaired of, and was fent into the country for change of air, as faid, but, in fact, that it should not die under the eye of its mother: the author calling upon the parents the day following, was told the case, and went with the father to see the child; its belly and lower extremities were greatly distended with water, and its hands and arms much emaciated. A spoonful of a mixture confifting of columbo, cinnamon water and ..... acet.

acet. scill. (about fix drops of the latter in each dose) was directed every three hours, which, without any other medicines, carried off the water by the kidnies in a few days, and a continuance of the medicine without the squill, restored the child to its usual strength in about three weeks, and he is at this time a fine strong youth.

#### CASE V.

G. W. a Publican in Westminster, aged forty-nine, long addicted to drinking, in the fummer 1780, during the time of the riots, drank a great quantity of plain geneva; he became feverish, complained of pain in the region of the liver, and in a few days afterwards his legs swelled, there was confiderable enlargement of the belly, with all the symptoms common to ascites. He took, without any medical advice, several doses of jalap and buckthorn, which purged him violently, but finding all his fymptoms more urgent nothwithstanding, he confulted the author, who found his pulse quick and full, great thirst, and difficuly of breathing, his belly, legs and thighs greatly distended, the liver apparently enlarged, his eyes and skin yellow, and the small quantity of urine he passed extremely high coloured and turbid.

It was with infinite reluctance he submitted to lose twelve ounces of blood, which was directed immediately; saline draughts were ordered to be taken every three hours, six grains of calomel at night, and a dose of salts in the morning, with cremor tartar drink for his common beverage.

The next day his breathing was fomewhat relieved, his pulse softer and less frequent, and thirst abated: he was ordered to continue his faline draughts, &c.

The day following all his fymptoms were more urgent than when the author faw him first, complaining of violent pain at the sternum, and the difficulty of breathing, during the preceding night, so great, that he could not lie down in his bed.

Upon enquiry, it was discovered that a friend had called upon him the day before, after the author had left him, and persuaded him to drink some gin and water with him, telling him he was too low; inclination, and his friends request, induced him to drink freely, of course his medecines were neglected; remonstrating with him on the impropriety of his conduct, he promised to obey implicitly in suture.

He was directed to lose ten ounces more blood immediately, to eat no animal food whatever, to live upon fruit alone, and to continue the saline draughts as before.

where the patients were meneral !-:

The next day, no better, he lost eight ounces more blood, had a blister applied to the sternum where he complained of great pain, was ordered his draughts as before, and a pill at night of ten grains of calomel, and a dose of common purging salts in the morning.

The following day he was much better, his pulse fofter, his thirst less, the breathing easier, the pain in the sternum gone, and that in the liver less, the abdomen softer, and the lower extremities not so much swelled,

errubecome, fired and incurable, and they are

He continued his faline medicines, with now and then his pill and falts, for a fortnight, when his pulse was soft, his skin moist and of the natural colour, the induration of the liver dispersed, the accumulated fluids discharged, his urine in colour and quantity as in health, his thirst no more, and breathing free: he then took of the Vegetable Essence, three times a day, and in two or three weeks more was in his moula health.

delicerative

Q 2 Several

Several cases of nearly the same description have been under the author's observation, and he has always sound them curable by similar means, when not of very long standing and where the patients were manageable; but it sometimes occurs, that where the dropsy has been the consequence of hard drinking, their sondness of, and indulgence in spirits, prevent them submitting to the necessary restrictions and proper regimen; in such cases by their indulgence the morbid affections of the liver or other viscera become fixed and incurable, and they are obliged to submit to be tapped, to prolong, in such cases, for a very short time only, a miserative be existence.

### CASE VI.

en final and and and hand to a course of the last

A Lady aged eighty, a tall, strong, hearty woman, always remarkably temperate, became dropsical. The abdomen increased greatly in size, as did likewise the lower extremities, attended with thirst, cough, difficulty of breathing, loss of appetite, total want of sleep, &c. she was costive, and passed not more than a quarter of a pint of water in the twenty-four hours: she consulted the physician of the place (a considerable distance from London) a man deservedly

deservedly celebrated as well for his medical skill as his private virtues, and, under his direction, took some medicines without experiencing any benefit.

The doctor's professional duties calling him much from home, the Lady became the patient of a surgeon and apothecary who had long been in the habit of attending her: under his direction she swallowed the strongest emeticks and catharticks his shop could furnish, with little intermission, and without any other effect than weakening and reducing her so much, that he at length abandoned her to her sate, telling her he could do no more for her, that the disease was incurable, and nature quite exhausted.

In this state the author was applied to, who, impelled by duty and affection, posted to her relief, and found her perfectly resigned to the fate which her surgeon told her was at no great distance.

Half a wine glass of a bitter aromatic tincture, was ordered to be taken every four hours, and a weak squill medicine with cinnamon water, to be taken three times in a day: the squill medicine excited a considerable spit-

ting, and, during the first twenty-four hours, the discharge by the urinary passage was three pints of water, which increased to four the next day, and thus continued increasing for feveral days; the body regular during the time, and the appetite and strength mending every day, no alteration was made in her medicines, and at the end of eight days, the author left her perfectly free from cough and every hydropic symptom; he had directed her to wear a bandage at the time the water was passing of fo rapidly, and to continue it for some time afterwards; the fquill medicine at the eight days end was discontinued, but she took her bitters for fome time afterwards, and became perfectly s dicortific, and nature pure exha-

Whenever afterwards she observed any swelling about her ancies, she had recourse again to her squill and bitters, which always removed it. She thus went on whilst she lived, without suffering any inconvenience from her hydropic complaints.

# of a love result a to stally sale a that the control of the contro

Mrs. I. M. aged seventy, of very relaxed habit, averse to exercise, of a sedentary studious turn,

turn, temperate, and at all times of puny appetite, without any previous disease, became hydropic: she had the advice of a physician of confiderable repute, who ordered her fome ftrong physick, for the purpose of carrying off the fluids which had been deposited, as well in the abdomen as cellular membrane, directing, at the same time, a fuller diet, and an airing in the carriage, once or twice a day: the violent operation of the medicines, however, totally destroyed the trifling relish she had for food: she grew gradually weaker, the anafarcous swellings of her legs extended upwards to the thighs, the face and eyelids were much puffed up in the morning when she arose, and she had considerably increased in the waist.

She dismissed the doctor, and placed herself under the direction of a surgeon, with whom she was intimate, and of whose skill she had the highest opinion; she continued daily growing worse notwithstanding; it affected her the more, as she much wished to die where she was born, (upwards of two hundred miles distant from the metropolis, where she then was) and to be buried with her ancestors.

Too ill to attempt a journey of such length,

the author, who had lately returned from the Continent, was confulted, who directed her to take half a wine glass of the Vegetable Essence, three times a day, and a small dose of a very mild preparation of squill in the morning fasting: the squill thus exhibited, soon increased the urinary discharge, and by persevering in that, and the Vegetable Essence, she gained strength and spirits daily: so rapid indeed was the change, that in three weeks time she commenced her journey, and terminated it in better health and spirits.

Two or three weeks after her arrival in the country, her husband wrote a letter of thanks to the author for his services, and added, that his wife was, at the moment of writing, in better health than for many years before.

#### CASE VIII.

W. B. aged forty-seven, subject to gouty paroxysms at intervals, for some years, from adopting a new line of business, which much exposed him to all weathers night and day, after several irregular attacks of the gout, became dropsical, attended with difficulty of breathing, thirst, febrile rigour, &c. &c. he had

had the advice of a furgeon of great repute, who ordered him the throngest drastic purgatives, without any other effect than weakening the patient to the lowest ebb; he afterwards confulted the author, who found him extremely weak, belly and legs much fwelled, with thirst, cough, and difficulty of breathing so great, that he could not lie down in his bed, from fear of fuffocation: he was ordered a diuretic medicine twice a day, and the Vegetable Effence morning, noon and night, in the quantity of two ounces each dole: these medicines the party continued for several days, before he received any apparent benefit: at length a diurefis took place, and in the course of a month, from the author's first attendance, he was entirely free from every hydropic symptom, his appetite and colour improved, as well as frength and spirits; he then took of the Vegetable Esfence alone, and, in two or three weeks more, was able to resume his business.

By perseverance in the Vegetable Essence, he obtained a regular fit of the gout, and afterwards continued free from hydropic complaints the remainder of his days: his business being of the kind he could not give up, or re-

R

# [ 126 ]

mit his attention to at times, his arthritic paroxysms became more frequent, and continued so to his death, which happened a few years afterwards, without his again experiencing the dropsy.

# CASE IX.

W. H. aged thirty-three, of ftrong mufcular fibre: from family, fortune, and fituation in life, in the habits of keeping the first company, from excessive indulgence and irregularity, at the age of twenty-four, had a fevere fit of the gout, which, as he persevered in his excesses, frequently returned with increased rigour; at length, the paroxysms becoming irregular, and himfelf much debilitated, at thirtythree he became dropfical, and confulted a physician of the greatest respectability, who had constantly attended the family for a number of years, who, by strong medicines, carried off the effused fluids, but he almost immediately afterwards filled again, and both the abdomen and lower extremities became more diftended than before.

The same medicines which had before succeeded,

etection and there's and in the borner and reside

fucceeded, were again reforted to, but in vain; and after long continued use of the strongest evacuants, and no advantage gained, but every day more swelled and weaker, the author was consulted: at this time the patient had no appetite, passed very little urine, complained much of spasms in his feet and hands, had cough, thirst, &c. &c. and was in a state of extreme debility. del m bas asiredusadeb ain

He was directed to wear the fleecy hofiery upon his hands and legs, and ordered a nourishing diet, with as much old hock as he was inclined to drink; had the Vegetable Effence for ten days, in large doses, and mild diureticks, in such quantities only as should occasion a flow, gradual increase of the urinary difcharge. In the hole of confesse bestimet

At the end of three weeks his appetite, strength and spirits were much improved, the accumulated water in great measure carried off. and, at the expiration of another fortnight, every hydropic symptom had disappeared: the Hock had been gradually diminished, and Madeira substituted in its stead, the diuretic medicines had been discontinued, and the Vegeta-

R2

ble Essence alone was directed to be persevered in.

At this period he left town with proper directions for his conduct, and the strongest injunctions to refrain from excess in the use of the bottle, but it was in vain; he instantly, upon his arrival in the country, recommenced his debaucheries, and in less than a week was laid up with a very severe sit of the gout.

He persevered in the use of the Essence, both during and after the sit, by which means, with now and then resorting to his diuretic medicines, he prevented the hydropic symptoms ever becoming troublesome afterwards, but as he continued his indulgence with unremitted affection, he lost the use of his limbs by degrees, and at the age of thirty-eight, was totally incapable of motion without assistance, could not even walk upon crutches, and in a few months afterwards, in his thirty-ninth year, died a decrepted old man.

### CASE X.

A Lady in Wales, with ascites, anasarca, &c. who had tried for many months every medicine

dicine her physician and apothecary had directed, without relief, hearing, perchance of the cure of Mrs. P. (see the next Case, No. 11,) wrote to the author unknown to her medical attendants, stating her case, and requesting such medicines to be sent her, with sull directions for her management as he judged proper, particularly requesting the application might remain a secret.

The case was as follows: the party was in her fiftieth year, about feven years before had began to be irregular as to periods, but, when unwell, had fuch profuse discharges, that the was frequently unable to quit her bed for feveral days together; she consulted her apothecary who frequently bled her, and by whose directions she took the strongest astringents without effect; the continued thus for upwards of four years: at length the fwelling of her legs (which had before been troublesome at times) increased so much that she consulted a physician, under whose care she got reliefa few weeks afterwards the was fentible of an enlargement of the abdomen, which was foon afterwards followed by cedematous swellings of the

the lower extremities; the menstrual discharge, from this period, totally ceased.

The second terror and the

Variety of medicines were taken by the direction of the physician, who formerly attended her, and those of the strongest kind, but without advantage, and the accumulation increased so much that she was unable to sleep in any other position than in a chair; in this situation she remained for some time, the gentlemen attending her, declaring they could do nothing more, unless she consented to be tapped, to which she determined never to submit.

She was in this state, with the most aggravated hydropic symptoms, when she applied to the author.

directions the east the property subdirection

when pawed, bad fact profish differences in

As it was evident, from her flatement, that the dropfy had arisen in consequence of debility, from too great menstrual discharge, and the improper mode of treating her case, two quarts of Vegetable Essence were sent her, with directions to take a wine glass of it two or three times a day, and a small phial of drops, a sew to be taken every morning safting:

ting; this medicine the author had repeatedly feen effectual, after the failure of every other that the medical art could fuggest.

Directions were given that herself or friend should write at the fortnight's end, to state the effect: at the expiration of ten days, a friend of the lady wrote, to say, that the party was less in circumference, according to the measure, which had been directed every night and morning, though there had been no perceptible increase of the urinary discharge, and that she was in every respect better.

Five days afterwards the author received a letter to inform him, that the waters had passed off with such rapidity, soon after the former letter was sent, that they had been obliged to swathe her according to directions, and that the difficulty of breathing, cough, &c. had so far disappeared, that she had slept the night before in her bed, and her appetite, strength and spirits much improved.

She continued the Essence, after the waters were discharged, for some time, to prevent vent a relaple; some months afterwards the author was informed she continued in good health, entirely free from every symptom of dropsy, nor has he ever since heard that she suffered a relapse.

#### CASE XI.

Mrs. P. aged thirty-five, the mother of feveral children, became dropfical after lying-in. Living in Wales, she had the advice of a physician of long experience and great reputation in that country, soon after the disease became evident: according to the ancient, long established practice, he directed a frequent use of strong emeticks, and finding the disorder increase, notwithstanding they operated most powerfully, he directed the strongest drastic purgatives, the Materia Medica afforded, to be taken every other day: the use of these was persevered in some weeks, the disease daily growing worse.

The husband having some business to transact in London, took the opertunity of consulting a celebrated physician, now no more, Doctor Doctor Smith, who gave him but little hopes of his wife's recovery; ordering, at the same time, purgatives of the strongest nature every other or third day, and an emetick in the intermediate use of them.

This course was persisted in so long as the patient had strength to support it: business again calling the husband to London, he waited upon Dr. S. for surther advice; he could do no more, he said, and directed her to be tapped.

Overwhelmed with grief, he related the melancholy tale to a gentlman, a particular friend, who advised him to consult the author, which he did the same day, informing him, besides the particulars before stated, that his wife was naturally of a strong habit, that her labours had always been easy, especially the last, which was the seventh, had never suffered a miscarriage at any time, but that a few days after her last lying-in a violent slooding had taken place which occasioned great debility, and she soon afterwards discovered herself increased in size both in the abdomen and lower extremities, which continued to enlarge, not-

with-

withstanding the medicines she took, and she was at that time, (near eight months since the first appearance of the dropsy) totally incapable of even rising from the chair, or moving when risen, without assistance; with every symptom attendant upon hydropic diseases in the last stages, in the most aggravated degree.

As the distance precluded a visit, she was directed to take two ounces of a strong bitter aromatic vinous insusion three times a day, (the ingredients for which were given the husband, as one or two of the articles could not be had in that part of the country) and of a weak squill mixture every morning.

After a few days perseverance in her medicines as directed, her strength and spirits gradually increased, the waters passed gently away, and in a letter from the husband to the author, about a month afterwards, he informed him, that without taking any other medicine, she had no remaining symptoms of dropsy, and except weakness, was as well as ever in her life: but, that she continued the infusion as directed, and constantly rode out every day.

She was directed to persevere in the use of her bitters and daily exercise; she has, since that period, had two children, and never experienced any return of dropsy, though more than seven years since.

THE END.

## [ 331 ]

Sies was allested no perferencia the lust of her bitters and daily energies. The has face that period, had two children, and never engetiered on terms of though, though that then level period one.

Cua lur